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Poetical Works  
OF  
LORD BYRON.

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FIRST EDITION . . . *February, 1902.*  
SECOND EDITION . . . *May, 1905.*

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Albion 1820

Lord Byron

from a portrait by W. E. West on the occasion of Mr. E. J. J. J.





The Works  
OF  
LORD BYRON.

A NEW, REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION,  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

Poetry. Vol. V.

EDITED BY

ERNEST HARTLEY COLERIDGE, M.A.,

HON. F.R.S.L.

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1905.





## PREFACE TO THE FIFTH VOLUME.

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THE plays and poems contained in this volume were written within the space of two years—the last two years of Byron's career as a poet. But that was not all. Cantos VI.—XV. of *Don Juan*, *The Vision of Judgment*, *The Blues*, *The Irish Avatar*, and other minor poems, belong to the same period. The end was near, and, as though he had received a warning, he hastened to make the roll complete.

Proof is impossible, but the impression remains that the greater part of this volume has been passed over and left unread by at least two generations of readers. Old play-goers recall Macready as "Werner," and many persons have read *Cain*; but apart from students of literature, readers of *Sardanapalus* and of *The Two Foscari* are rare; of *The Age of Bronze* and *The Island* rarer still. A few of Byron's later poems have shared the fate of Southey's epics; and, yet, with something of Southey's persistence, Byron believed that posterity would weigh his "regular dramas" in a fresh balance, and that his

heedless critics would kick the beam. But "can these bones live"? Can dramas which excited the wondering admiration of Goethe and Lamartine and Sir Walter Scott touch or lay hold of the more adventurous reader of the present day? It is certain that even the half-forgotten works of a great and still popular poet, which have left their mark on the creative imagination of the poets and playwrights of three quarters of a century, will always be studied by the few from motives of curiosity, or for purposes of reference; but it is improbable, though not impossible, that in the revolution of taste and sentiment, moribund or extinct poetry will be born again into the land of the living. Poetry which has never had its day, such as Blake's *Songs of Innocence*, the *Lyrical Ballads*, or Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyám*, may come, in due time, to be recognized at its full worth; but it is a harder matter for a poem which has lost its vogue to recapture the interest and enthusiasm of the many.

Byron is only an instance in point. Bygone poetry has little or no attraction for modern readers. This poem or that drama may be referred to, and occasionally examined in the interests of general culture, or in support of a particular belief or line of conduct, as a classical or quasi-scriptural authority; but, with the rarest exceptions, plays and narrative poems are not read spontaneously or with any genuine satisfaction or delight. An old-world poem which will not yield up its secret to the idle *reader* "of an empty day" is more or less

"rudely dismissed," without even a show of favour or hospitality.

And yet these forgotten works of the imagination are full of hidden treasures! There is not one of Byron's "impressionist studies" of striking episodes of history or historical legend, flung, as it were, with a "Take it or leave it" in the face of friend or foe, which does not transform names and shadows into persons and substance, which does not contain lines and passages of unquestionable beauty and distinction.

But some would have it that Byron's plays, as a whole, are dull and uninspiring, monotonous harpings on worn-out themes, which every one has mastered or wishes to forget. A close study of the text, together with some knowledge of the subject as it presented itself to the author and arrested *his* attention, may compel these impatient critics to a different conclusion. Byron did not scruple to refer the reader to his "sources," and was at pains to publish, in the notes and appendices to his dramas and poems, long extracts from old chronicles, from Plutarch's *Lives*, from French and Italian histories, which he had read himself, and, as he fondly believed, would be read by others, who were willing to submit themselves to his guidance. He expected his readers to take some trouble and to display some intelligence.

Poetry is successful only so far as it is intelligible. To a clear cry an answer comes, but not to a muffled call. The reader who comes within speaking distance

of his author can hear him, and to bring the living within speaking distance of the dead, the living must know the facts, and understand the ideas which informed and inspired the dead. Thought and attention are scarcely to be reckoned among necromantic arts, but thought and knowledge "can make these bones live," and stand upon their feet, if they do not leap and sing.

I desire to renew my acknowledgments of the generous assistance of the officials of the British Museum, and, more especially, of Mr. Ernest Wallis Budge, Litt.D., M.A., *Keeper of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities*; of Mr. Leonard W. King, M.A., of the same department; and of Mr. George F. Barwick, *Superintendent of the Reading Room*.

To Dr. Garnett, C.B., I am greatly indebted for invaluable hints and suggestions with regard to the interpretation of some obscure passages in *The Age of Bronze* and other parts of the volume, and for reading the proofs of the "Introduction" and "Note to the Introduction to *Werner*."

I have also to acknowledge the assistance and advice of Mr. W. Hale White, and of my friend Mr. Frank E. Taylor, of Chertsey.

For assistance during the preparation of the volume, and more especially in the revision of proofs, I desire to express my cordial thanks to Mr. John Murray.

ERNEST HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

*December 3, 1901.*

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SARDANAPALUS:  
A TRAGEDY.

[*Sardanapale*, *Tragédie Imitée de Lord Byron*, par L. Alvin, was performed at the Théâtre Royal at Brussels, January 13, 16, 1834.

*Sardanapalus*, a Tragedy, was played for the first time at Drury Lane Theatre, April 10, 1834, and (for the twenty-second time) June 5, 1834. Macready appeared as "Sardanapalus," Miss Phillips as "Zarina," and Miss Ellen Tree as "Myrrha." [In his diary for April 11, 1834 (see *Reminiscences*, 1875, i. 414, 415) Macready wrote, "On arriving at my chambers . . . I found a letter without a signature; the seal was the head of Byron, and in the envelope was a folded sheet with merely the words, 'Werner, Nov., 1830. Byron, Ravenna, 1821,' and 'Sardanapalus, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1834.' Encircling the name of Byron, etc., was a lock of grey hair fastened by a gold thread, which I am sure was Byron's, . . . it surprised and pleased me."]

*Sardanapalus*, *King of Assyria*, was produced at the Princess's Theatre, June 13, 1853, and played till September 2, 1853. Charles Kean appeared as "Sardanapalus," Miss Heath as "Zarina," and Mrs. Charles Kean as "Myrrha."

*Sardanapale*, *Opéra en Trois Actes*, par M. Henry Becque, Musique de M. Victorin Joncières, was performed for the first time at the Théâtre Impérial-Lyrique, February 8, 1867.

*Lord Byron's Tragedy of Sardanapalus*, in four acts, was performed at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, March 31—April 28, 1877. Charles Calvert (the adapter) played "Sardanapalus," Miss Hathaway "Zarina," and Miss Fanny Ensor "Myrrha;" and June 26—July 27, 1877, at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool. Calvert's adaptation was also performed at Booth's Theatre, New York.]

## INTRODUCTION TO *SARDANAPALUS*.

---

BYRON'S passion or infatuation for the regular drama lasted a little over a year. *Marino Faliero*, *Sardanapalus*, and the *Two Foscari*, were the fruits of his "self-denying ordinance to dramatize, like the Greeks . . . striking passages of history" (letter to Murray, July 14, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 323). The mood was destined to pass, but for a while the neophyte was spell-bound.

*Sardanapalus*, a *Tragedy*, the second and, perhaps, the most successful of these studies in the poetry of history, was begun at Ravenna, January 13, 1821, "with all deliberate speed;" but, for a time, from laziness or depression of spirits, or, perhaps, from the counter-excitement of "the poetry of politics" (*Letters*, 1901, v. 205), that is, the revolutionary drama which had begun to run its course, a month went by before he had finished the first act (February 15). Three months later (May 28) he announces the completion of the drama, the last act having been "dashed off" in two or three days (*Letters*, 1901, v. 300).

For the story of *Sardanapalus*, which had excited his interest as a schoolboy, Byron consulted the pages of Diodorus Siculus (*Bibliothecæ Historica*, lib. ii. pp. 78, *sq.*, ed. 1604), and, possibly to ward off and neutralize the distracting influence of Shakespeare and other barbarian dramatists, he "turned over" the tragedies of Seneca (*Letters*, 1901, v. 173). It is hardly necessary to remind the modern reader that the *Sardanapalus* of history is an unverified if not an unverifiable personage. Diodorus the Sicilian, who was contemporary with Cicero, derived his knowledge of Assyrian history from the *Persica* of Ctesias of Cnidos, who was private physician at the court of Artaxerxes Mnemon (B.C. 405-359), and is said to have had access to, and to have consulted, the "Persian authorities" (διφθέραι βασιλικαί).

The character which Ctesias depicted or invented, an

effeminate debauchee, sunk in luxury and sloth, who at the last was driven to take up arms, and, after a prolonged but ineffectual resistance, avoided capture by suicide, cannot be identified. Asurbanipal (Ašur-bāni-apli), the son of Esarhaddon and grandson of Sennacherib, who ascended the throne B.C. 668, and reigned for about forty years, was, as the cuneiform records and the friezes of his palace testify, a bold hunter and a mighty warrior. He vanquished Tarḫū (Tirhakah) of Ethiopia, and his successor, Urdamañe. Ba'al King of Tyre, Yakinlū King of the island-city of Arvad, Sandāsarmū of Cilicia, Teumman of Elam, and other potentates, suffered defeat at his hands. "The land of Elam," writes the king or his "Historiographer Royal," "through its extent I covered as when a mighty storm approaches; I cut off the head of Teumman, their king . . . Beyond number I slew his warriors; alive in my hands I took his fighting men; with their corpses, as with thorns and thistles, I filled the vicinity of Susa; their blood I caused to flow in the Eulæus, and I stained its waters like wool." Clearly the Sardanapalus who painted his face and carded purple wool in the *penetralia* of his seraglio does not bear even a traditional resemblance to Ašur-bāni-apli the Conqueror.

All that can be affirmed with any certainty is that within twenty years of the death of Asurbanipal, the Assyrian Empire passed into the hands of the Medes;<sup>1</sup> but there is nothing to show whether the period of decay had already set in before the close of his reign, or under which of his two successors, Āsur-etil-ilāni or Sin-šar-iškun, the final catastrophe (B.C. 606), took place (*Encyclopedia Biblica*, art. "Assyria," art. "Asur-bani-pal," by Leonard W. King).

"I have made," writes Byron (May 25, 1821), "Sardanapalus brave though voluptuous (as history represents him), and as amiable as my poor pen could make him." Diodorus, or rather Ctesias, who may have drawn upon personal reminiscences of his patron, Artaxerxes Mnemon (see Plutarch's *Artaxerxes*, *passim*), does not enlarge upon his amiability, and credits him only with the courage of despair. Byron's Sardanapalus, with his sudden transition from

1. [For a description of the fall of Nineveh, see *Nahum* ii. 1, *sqq.*—  
"He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face. . . . The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet. . . . The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings. He shall recount his worthies: they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the defence shall be prepared. The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved," etc.]

voluptuous abandonment to heroic chivalry, his remorseful recognition of the sanctities of wedlock, his general good nature, his "sly, insinuating sarcasms" (Moore's Diary, September 30, 1821, *Memoirs*, iii. 282), "all made out of the carver's brain," resembles *history* as little as *history* resembles the Assyrian record. Fortunately, the genius of the poet escaped from the meshes which he had woven round himself, and, in spite of himself, he was constrained to "beat his music out," regardless of his authorities.

The character of Myrrha, which bears some resemblance to Aspasia, "a native of Phoea in Ionia—the favourite mistress of Cyrus" (see Plutarch's *Artaxerxes*, Langhorne's Translation, 1838, p. 699), was introduced partly to pacify the Countess Guiccioli, who had quarrelled with him for maintaining that "love was not the loftiest theme for true tragedy," and, in part, to prove that he was not a slave to his own ideals, and could imagine and delineate a woman who was both passionate and high-minded. Diodorus (*Bibl. Hist.*, lib. iii. p. 130) records the exploits of Myrina, Queen of the Amazons, but it is probable that Byron named his Ionian slave after Mirra, who gives her name to Alfieri's tragedy, which brought on a convulsive fit of tears and shuddering when he first saw it played at Bologna in August, 1819 (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 339).

*Sardanapalus, a Tragedy*, was published together with *The Two Foscari, a Tragedy*, and *Cain, a Mystery*, December 19, 1821.

The three plays were reviewed by Heber in the *Quarterly Review*, July, 1822, vol. xxvii. pp. 476-524; by Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*, February, 1822, vol. 36, pp. 413-452; in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, February, 1822, vol. xi. pp. 212-217; and in the *Portfolio* (Philadelphia), December, 1822, vol. xiv. pp. 487-492.



TO  
THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE  
A STRANGER  
PRESUMES TO OFFER THE HOMAGE  
OF A LITERARY VASSAL TO HIS LIEGE LORD,  
THE FIRST OF EXISTING WRITERS,  
WHO HAS CREATED  
THE LITERATURE OF HIS OWN COUNTRY,  
AND ILLUSTRATED THAT OF EUROPE.  
THE UNWORTHY PRODUCTION  
WHICH THE AUTHOR VENTURES TO INSCRIBE TO HIM  
IS ENTITLED  
SARDANAPALUS.<sup>1</sup>

1. ["A manuscript dedication of *Sardanapalus* . . . was forwarded to him, with an obliging inquiry whether it might be prefixed to the tragedy. The German, who, at his advanced age, was conscious of his own powers, and of their effects, could only gratefully and modestly consider this Dedication as the expression of an inexhaustible intellect, deeply feeling and creating its own object. He was by no means dissatisfied when, after long delay, *Sardanapalus* appeared without the Dedication; and was made happy by the possession of a facsimile of it, engraved on stone, which he considered a precious memorial."—*Lebensverhältnisse zu Byron, Werke*, 1833, xlv. 221-225. (See, too, for translation, *Life*, p. 593.)]





## PREFACE.

---

IN publishing the following Tragedies<sup>1</sup> I have only to repeat, that they were not composed with the most remote view to the stage. On the attempt made by the managers in a former instance, the public opinion has been already expressed. With regard to my own private feelings, as it seems that they are to stand for nothing, I shall say nothing.

For the historical foundation of the following compositions the reader is referred to the Notes.

The Author has in one instance attempted to preserve, and in the other to approach, the "unities;" conceiving that with any very distant departure from them, there may be poetry, but can be no drama. He is aware of the unpopularity of this notion in present English literature; but it is not a system of his own, being merely an opinion, which, not very long ago, was the law of literature throughout the world, and is still so in the more civilised parts of it. But "nous avons changé tout cela," and are reaping the advantages of the change. The writer is far from conceiving that any thing he can adduce by personal precept or example can at all approach his regular, or even irregular predecessors: he is merely giving a reason why he preferred the more regular formation of a structure, however feeble, to an entire abandonment of all rules whatsoever. Where he has failed, the failure is in the architect,—and not in the art.

1. [*Sardanapalus* originally appeared in the same volume with *The Two Foscari* and *Cain*. The date of publication was December 19, 1821.]



IN this tragedy it has been my intention to follow the account of Diodorus Siculus ;<sup>1</sup> reducing it, however, to such dramatic regularity as I best could, and trying to approach the unities. I therefore suppose the rebellion to explode and succeed in one day by a sudden conspiracy, instead of the long war of the history.

1. ["Sardanapalus, the Thirtieth from Ninus, and the last King of the Assyrians, exceeded all his Predecessors in Sloth and Luxury ; for besides that he was seen of none out of his family, he led a most effeminate life ; for wallowing in Pleasure and wanton Dalliances, he cloathed himself in Womens' attire, and spun fine Wool and Purple amongst the throngs of his Whores and Concubines. He painted likewise his Face, and decked his whole Body with other Allurements. . . . He imitated likewise a Woman's voice . . . ; and proceeded to such a degree of voluptuousness that he composed verses for his Epitaph . . . which were thus translated by a Grecian out of the Barbarian language—

Ταῦτ' ἔχω θσ' ἔφαγον καὶ ἐφύβρισα, καὶ μετ' ἔρωτος  
Τέρπν' ἔπαθον τὰ δὲ πολλὰ καὶ ὕλβια κείνα λέλειπται.

"What once I gorged I now enjoy,  
And wanton Lusts me still employ ;  
All other things by Mortals prized  
Are left as dirt by me despised."

—*The Historical Library of Diodorus the Sicilian*, made English by G. Booth, of the City of Chester, Esquire, 1700, p. 65.

"Another king of the sort was Sardanapalus. . . . And so, when Arbaces, who was one of the generals under him, a Mede by birth, endeavoured to manage by the assistance of one of the eunuchs, whose name was Sparamizus, to see Sardanapalus : and when . . . he saw him painted with vermillion, and adorned like a woman, sitting among his concubines, carding purple wool, and sitting among them with his feet up, wearing a woman's robe, and with his beard carefully scraped, and his face smoothed with pumice stone (for he was whiter than milk, and pencilled under his eyes and eyebrows ; and when he saw Arbaces he was putting a little more white under his eyes). Most historians, of whom Duris is one, relate that Arbaces, being indignant at his countrymen being ruled over by such a monarch as that, stabbed him and slew him. But Ctesias says that he went to war with him, and collected a great army, and then that Sardanapalus, being dethroned by Arbaces, died, burning himself alive in his palace, having heaped up a funeral pile four plethra in extent, on which he placed 150 golden couches." —*The Deipnosophistæ* . . . of Athenæus, bk. xii. c. 38, translated by C. D. Yonge, 1854, iii. 847.]









Waller's "Excavations", pl. I.

*Assur - Bani - Pal*  
*from a sketch in the British Museum*





# SARDANAPALUS.<sup>1</sup>

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Palace.*

*Salemenes (solus).* HE hath wronged his queen, but  
still he is her lord ;  
He hath wronged my sister—still he is my brother ;

x. [This prince surpassed all his predecessors in effeminacy, luxury, and cowardice. He never went out of his palace, but spent all his time among a company of women, dressed and painted like them, and employed like them at the distaff. He placed all his happiness and glory in the possession of immense treasures, in feasting and rioting, and indulging himself in all the most infamous and criminal pleasures. He ordered two verses to be put upon his tomb, signifying that he carried away with him all he had eaten, and all the pleasures he had enjoyed, but left everything else behind him,—*an epitaph*, says Aristotle, *fit for a hog*. Arbaces, governor of Media, having found means to get into the palace, and having with his own eyes seen Sardanapalus in the midst of his infamous seraglio, enraged at such a spectacle, and not able to endure that so many brave men should be subjected to a prince more soft and effeminate than the women themselves, immediately formed a conspiracy against him. Beleses, governor of Babylon, and several others, entered into it. On the first rumour of this revolt the king hid himself in the inmost part of his palace. Being afterwards obliged to take the field with some forces which he had assembled, he at first gained three successive victories over the enemy, but was afterwards overcome, and pursued to the gates of Nineveh ; wherein he shut himself, in hopes the rebels would never be able to take a city so well fortified, and stored with provisions for a considerable time. The siege proved indeed of very great length. It had been declared by an ancient oracle that Nineveh could never be taken unless the river became an enemy to the city. These words buoyed up Sardanapalus, because he looked upon the thing as impossible. But when he saw that the Tigris, by a violent inundation, had thrown down twenty stadia (two miles and a half) of the city wall, and by that means opened a passage to the enemy, he understood the meaning of the oracle, and thought himself lost. He resolved, however, to die in such a manner as, according to

He hath wronged his people—still he is their sovereign—  
 And I must be his friend as well as subject :  
 He must not perish thus. I will not see  
 The blood of Nimrod and Semiramis  
 Sink in the earth, and thirteen hundred years  
 Of Empire ending like a shepherd's tale ;  
 He must be roused. In his effeminate heart  
 There is a careless courage which Corruption 10  
 Has not all quenched, and latent energies,  
 Repressed by circumstance, but not destroyed—  
 Steeped, but not drowned, in deep voluptuousness.  
 If born a peasant, he had been a man  
 To have reached an empire : to an empire born,  
 He will bequeath none ; nothing but a name,  
 Which his sons will not prize in heritage :—  
 Yet—not all lost—even yet—he may redeem  
 His sloth and shame, by only being that  
 Which he should be, as easily as the thing 20  
 He should not be and is. Were it less toil  
 To sway his nations than consume his life ?  
 To head an army than to rule a harem ?  
 He sweats in palling pleasures, dulls his soul,<sup>1</sup>  
 And saps his goodly strength, in toils which yield not  
 Health like the chase, nor glory like the war—  
 He must be roused. Alas ! there is no sound

[*Sound of soft music heard from within.*]

To rouse him short of thunder. Hark ! the lute—  
 The lyre—the timbrel ; the lascivious tinklings  
 Of lulling instruments, the softening voices 30  
 Of women, and of beings less than women,  
 Must chime in to the echo of his revel,  
 While the great King of all we know of earth  
 Lolls crowned with roses, and his diadem  
 Lies negligently by to be caught up  
 By the first manly hand which dares to snatch it.  
 Lo, where they come ! already I perceive

1. *He sweats in dreary, dulled effeminacy.*—[MS. M. erased.]

his opinion, should cover the infamy of his scandalous and effeminate life. He ordered a pile of wood to be made in his palace, and, setting fire to it, burnt himself, his eunuchs, his women, and his treasures.—Diod. Sic., *Bibl. Hist.*, lib. ii. pag. 78, 399., ed. 1604, p. 109.]

The reeking odours of the perfumed trains,  
 And see the bright gems of the glittering girls,<sup>1</sup>  
 At once his Chorus and his Council, flash 40  
 Along the gallery, and amidst the damsels,  
 As femininely garbed, and scarce less female,  
 The grandson of Semiramis, the Man-Queen.—  
 He comes! Shall I await him? yes, and front him,  
 And tell him what all good men tell each other,  
 Speaking of him and his. They come, the slaves  
 Led by the monarch subject to his slaves.

## SCENE II.

*Enter SARDANAPALUS effeminately dressed, his Head crowned with Flowers, and his Robe negligently flowing, attended by a Train of Women and young Slaves.*

*Sar. (speaking to some of his attendants).* Let the pavilion<sup>1</sup> over the Euphrates  
 Be garlanded, and lit, and furnished forth  
 For an especial banquet; at the hour  
 Of midnight we will sup there: see nought wanting,  
 And bid the galley be prepared. There is  
 A cooling breeze which crisps the broad clear river:  
 We will embark anon. Fair Nymphs, who deign

i. *And see the gewgaws of the glittering girls.*—[MS. M. erased.]

1. ["The words *Queen* (*vide infra*, line 83) and *pavilion* occur, but it is not an allusion to his Britannic Majesty, as you may tremulously (for the admiralty custom) imagine. This you will one day see (if I finish it), as I have made Sardanapalus *brave* (though voluptuous, as history represents him), and also as *amiable* as my poor powers could render him. So that it could neither be truth nor satire on any living monarch."—Letter to Murray, May 25, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 299.

Byron pretended, or, perhaps, really thought, that such a phrase as the "Queen's wrongs" would be supposed to contain an allusion to the trial of Queen Caroline (August—November, 1820), and to the exclusion of her name from the State prayers, etc. Unquestionably if the play had been put on the stage at this time, the pit and gallery would have applauded the sentiment to the echo. There was, too, but one "pavilion" in 1821, and that was not on the banks of the Euphrates, but at Brighton. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse*. Byron was not above "paltering" with his readers "in a double sense."

To share the soft hours of Sardanapalus,  
 We'll meet again in that the sweetest hour,  
 When we shall gather like the stars above us, 10  
 And you will form a heaven as bright as theirs ;  
 Till then, let each be mistress of her time,  
 And thou, my own Ionian Myrrha,<sup>1</sup> choose ;  
 Wilt thou along with them or me ?

*Myr.*

My Lord——

*Sar.* My Lord !—my Life ! why answerest thou so coldly ?

It is the curse of kings to be so answered.  
 Rule thy own hours, thou rulest mine—say, wouldst thou  
 Accompany our guests, or charm away  
 The moments from me ?

*Myr.*

The King's choice is mine.

*Sar.* I pray thee say not so : my chiefest joy 20  
 Is to contribute to thine every wish.  
 I do not dare to breathe my own desire,  
 Lest it should clash with thine ; for thou art still  
 Too prompt to sacrifice thy thoughts for others.

*Myr.* I would remain : I have no happiness  
 Save in beholding thine ; yet——

*Sar.*

Yet ! what yet ?

Thy own sweet will shall be the only barrier  
 Which ever rises betwixt thee and me.

*Myr.* I think the present is the wonted hour  
 Of council ; it were better I retire. 30

*Sal. (comes forward and says)* The Ionian slave says  
 well : let her retire.

*Sar.* Who answers ? How now, brother ?

*Sal.*

The *Queen's* brother,

And your most faithful vassal, royal Lord.

*Sar. (addressing his train).* As I have said, let all  
 dispose their hours  
 Till midnight, when again we pray your presence.

[*The court retiring.*]

1. "The Ionian name had been still more comprehensive ; having included the Achaïans and the Bœotians, who, together with those to whom it was afterwards confined, would make nearly the whole of the Greek nation ; and among the Orientals it was always the general name for the Greeks."—MITFORD'S *Greece*, 1818, i. 199.

(*To MYRRHA,<sup>i</sup> who is going.*) Myrrha! I thought *thou* wouldst remain.

*Myr.* Great King,  
Thou didst not say so.

*Sar.* But *thou* looked'st it :  
I know each glance of those Ionic eyes,<sup>ii</sup>  
Which said thou wouldst not leave me.

*Myr.* Sire ! your brother——  
*Sal.* His *Consort's* brother, minion of Ionia ! 40  
How darest *thou* name *me* and not blush ?

*Sar.* Not blush !  
Thou hast no more eyes than heart to make her crimson  
Like to the dying day on Caucasus,  
Where sunset tints the snow with rosy shadows,  
And then reproach her with thine own cold blindness,  
Which will not see it. What ! in tears, my Myrrha ?

*Sal.* Let them flow on ; she weeps for more than one,  
And is herself the cause of bitterer tears.

*Sar.* Curséd be he who caused those tears to flow !

*Sal.* Curse not thyself—millions do that already. 50

*Sar.* Thou dost forget thee : make me not remember  
I am a monarch.

*Sal.* Would thou couldst !

*Myr.* My sovereign,  
I pray, and thou, too, Prince, permit my absence.

*Sar.* Since it must be so, and this churl has checked  
Thy gentle spirit, go ; but recollect  
That we must forthwith meet : I had rather lose  
An empire than thy presence. [*Exit MYRRHA.*]

*Sal.* It may be,  
Thou wilt lose both—and both for ever !

*Sar.* Brother !  
I can at least command myself, who listen  
To language such as this : yet urge me not 60  
Beyond my easy nature.

*Sal.* 'Tis beyond  
That easy—far too easy—idle nature,  
Which I would urge thee. O that I could rouse thee !

i. *To Byblis* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

ii. *I know each glance of those deep Greek-souled eyes.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

Though 'twere against myself.

*Sar.* By the god Baal !

The man would make me tyrant.

*Sal.* So thou art.

Think'st thou there is no tyranny but that

Of blood and chains ? The despotism of vice,

The weakness and the wickedness of luxury,

The negligence, the apathy, the evils

Of sensual sloth—produce ten thousand tyrants, 70

Whose delegated cruelty surpasses

The worst acts of one energetic master,

However harsh and hard in his own bearing.

The false and fond examples of thy lusts

Corrupt no less than they oppress, and sap

In the same moment all thy pageant power

And those who should sustain it ; so that whether

A foreign foe invade, or civil broil

Distract within, both will alike prove fatal :

The first thy subjects have no heart to conquer ; 80

The last they rather would assist than vanquish.

*Sar.* Why, what makes thee the mouth-piece of the people ?

*Sal.* Forgiveness of the Queen, my sister wrongs ;

A natural love unto my infant nephews ;

Faith to the King, a faith he may need shortly,

In more than words ; respect for Nimrod's line ;

Also, another thing thou knowest not.

*Sar.* What's that ?

*Sal.* To thee an unknown word.

*Sar.* Yet speak it ;

I love to learn.

*Sal.* Virtue.

*Sar.* Not know the word !

Never was word yet rung so in my ears— 90

Worse than the rabble's shout, or splitting trumpet :

I've heard thy sister talk of nothing else.

*Sal.* To change the irksome theme, then, hear of vice.

*Sar.* From whom ?

*Sal.* Even from the winds, if thou couldst listen  
Unto the echoes of the Nation's voice.

*Sar.* Come, I'm indulgent, as thou knowest, patient,

As thou hast often proved—speak out, what moves thee?

*Sal.* Thy peril.

*Sar.* Say on.

*Sal.* Thus, then: all the nations,  
For they are many, whom thy father left  
In heritage, are loud in wrath against thee. 100

*Sar.* 'Gainst me! / What would the slaves?

*Sal.* A king.

*Sar.* And what  
Am I then?

*Sal.* In their eyes a nothing; but  
In mine a man who might be something still.

*Sar.* The railing drunkards! why, what would they  
have?

Have they not peace and plenty?

*Sal.* Of the first  
More than is glorious; of the last, far less  
Than the King recks of.

*Sar.* Whose then is the crime,  
But the false satraps, who provide no better?

*Sal.* And somewhat in the Monarch who ne'er looks  
Beyond his palace walls, or if he stirs 110  
Beyond them, 'tis but to some mountain palace,  
Till summer heats wear down. O glorious Baal!  
Who built up this vast empire, and wert made  
A God, or at the least shimest like a God  
Through the long centuries of thy renown,  
This, thy presumed descendant, ne'er beheld  
As king the kingdoms thou didst leave as hero,  
Won with thy blood, and toil, and time, and peril!  
For what? to furnish imposts for a revel,  
Or multiplied extortions for a minion. 120

*Sar.* I understand thee—thou wouldst have me go  
Forth as a conqueror. By all the stars  
Which the Chaldeans read—the restless slaves<sup>1</sup>  
Deserve that I should curse them with their wishes,  
And lead them forth to glory.

*Sal.* Wherefore not?  
Semiramis—a woman only—led

i. — I have a mind  
To curse the restless slaves with their own wishes.—[MS. M. erased.]



These our Assyrians to the solar shores  
Of Ganges.

*Sar.* 'Tis most true. And *how* returned ?

*Sal.* Why, like a *man*—a hero ; baffled, but  
Not vanquished. With but twenty guards, she made  
Good her retreat to Bactria.

*Sar.* And how many 131  
Left she behind in India to the vultures ?

*Sal.* Our annals say not.

*Sar.* Then I will say for them—  
That she had better woven within her palace  
Some twenty garments, than with twenty guards  
Have fled to Bactria, leaving to the ravens,  
And wolves, and men—the fiercer of the three,  
Her myriads of fond subjects. Is *this* Glory ?  
Then let me live in ignominy ever.

*Sal.* All warlike spirits have not the same fate. 140  
Semiramis, the glorious parent of  
A hundred kings, although she failed in India,  
Brought Persia—Media—Bactria—to the realm  
Which she once swayed—and thou *might'st* sway.

*Sar.* *I sway* them—  
She but subdued them.

*Sal.* It may be ere long  
That they will need her sword more than your sceptre

*Sar.* There was a certain Bacchus, was there not ?  
I've heard my Greek girls speak of such—they say  
He was a God, that is, a Grecian god,  
An idol foreign to Assyria's worship, 150  
Who conquered this same golden realm of Ind  
Thou prat'st of, where Semiramis was vanquished.

*Sal.* I have heard of such a man ; and thou perceiv'st  
That he is deemed a God for what he did.

*Sar.* And in his godship I will honour him—  
Not much as man. What, ho ! my cupbearer !

*Sal.* What means the King ?

*Sar.* To worship your new God  
And ancient conqueror. Some wine, I say.

*Enter Cupbearer.*

*Sar. (addressing the Cupbearer).* Bring me the golden  
goblet thick with gems,  
Which bears the name of Nimrod's chalice. Hence, 160  
Fill full, and bear it quickly. [*Exit Cupbearer.*

*Sal.* Is this moment  
A fitting one for the resumption of  
Thy yet unslept-off revels?

*Re-enter Cupbearer, with wine.*

*Sar. (taking the cup from him).* Noble kinsman,  
If these barbarian Greeks of the far shores  
And skirts of these our realms lie not, this Bacchus  
Conquered the whole of India,<sup>1</sup> did he not?

*Sal.* He did, and thence was deemed a Deity.<sup>1</sup>

*Sar.* Not so:—of all his conquests a few columns.<sup>2</sup>  
Which may be his, and might be mine, if I  
Thought them worth purchase and conveyance, are 170  
The landmarks of the seas of gore he shed,  
The realms he wasted, and the hearts he broke.  
But here—here in this goblet is his title  
To immortality—the immortal grape  
From which he first expressed the soul, and gave  
To gladden that of man, as some atonement  
For the victorious mischiefs he had done.  
Had it not been for this, he would have been  
A mortal still in name as in his grave;  
And, like my ancestor Semiramis, 180  
A sort of semi-glorious human monster.  
Here's that which deified him—let it now  
Humanise thee; my surly, chiding brother,

i. *He did, and thence was deemed a God in story.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. [For the occupation of India by Dionysus, see *Diod. Siculi Bib. Hist.*, lib. ii. pag. 87, c.]

2. [Strabo (*Kerum Geog.*, lib. iii. 1807, p. 235) throws some doubt on the existence of these columns, which he suggests were islands or "pillar" rocks. According to Plutarch (*Langhorne's Translation*, 1838, p. 490), Alexander built great altars on the banks of the Ganges, on which the native kings were wont to "offer sacrifices in the Grecian manner." Hence, perhaps, the legend of the columns erected by Dionysus.]

Pledge me to the Greek God !

*Sal.* For all thy realms  
I would not so blaspheme our country's creed.

*Sar.* That is to say, thou thinkest him a hero,  
That he shed blood by oceans ; and no God,  
Because he turned a fruit to an enchantment,  
Which cheers the sad, revives the old, inspires  
The young, makes Weariness forget his toil, 190  
And Fear her danger ; opens a new world  
When this, the present, palls. Well, then I pledge thee  
And *him* as a true man, who did his utmost  
In good or evil to surprise mankind. [*Drinks.*]

*Sal.* Wilt thou resume a revel at this hour ?

*Sar.* And if I did, 'twere better than a trophy,  
Being bought without a tear. But that is not  
My present purpose : since thou wilt not pledge me,  
Continue what thou pleasest.

(*To the Cupbearer.*)

Boy, retire.

[*Exit Cupbearer.*]

*Sal.* I would but have recalled thee from thy dream ;  
Better by me awakened than rebellion. 201

*Sar.* Who should rebel ? or why ? what cause ? pretext ?  
I am the lawful King, descended from  
A race of Kings who knew no predecessors.  
What have I done to thee, or to the people,  
That thou shouldst rail, or they rise up against me ?

*Sal.* Of what thou hast done to me, I speak not.

*Sar.* But  
Thou think'st that I have wronged the Queen : is't not so ?

*Sal.* Think ! Thou hast wronged her !

*Sar.* Patience, Prince, and hear me.  
She has all power and splendour of her station, 210  
Respect, the tutelage of Assyria's heirs,  
The homage and the appanage of sovereignty.  
I married her as monarchs wed—for state,  
And loved her as most husbands love their wives.  
If she or thou supposedst I could link me  
Like a Chaldean peasant to his mate,  
Ye knew nor me—nor monarchs—nor mankind.

*Sal.* I pray thee, change the theme : my blood disdains  
Complaint, and Salemenes' sister seeks not

Reluctant love even from Assyria's lord !  
Nor would she deign to accept divided passion  
With foreign strumpets and Ionian slaves.  
The Queen is silent. 220

*Sar.* And why not her brother ?

*Sal.* I only echo thee the voice of empires,  
Which he who long neglects not long will govern.

*Sar.* The ungrateful and ungracious slaves ! they  
murmur

Because I have not shed their blood, nor led them  
To dry into the desert's dust by myriads,  
Or whiten with their bones the banks of Ganges ;  
Nor decimated them with savage laws, 230  
Nor sweated them to build up Pyramids,  
Or Babylonian walls.

*Sal.* Yet these are trophies  
More worthy of a people and their prince  
Than songs, and lutes, and feasts, and concubines,  
And lavished treasures, and contemnéd virtues.

*Sar.* Or for my trophies I have founded cities :  
There's Tarsus and Anchialus, both built  
In one day—what could that blood-loving beldame,  
My martial grandam, chaste Semiramis,  
Do more, except destroy them ?

*Sal.* 'Tis most true ; 240  
I own thy merit in those founded cities,  
Built for a whim, recorded with a verse  
Which shames both them and thee to coming ages.

*Sar.* Shame me ! By Baal, the cities, though well built,  
Are not more goodly than the verse ! Say what  
Thou wilt 'gainst me, my mode of life or rule,  
But nothing 'gainst the truth of that brief record.  
Why, those few lines contain the history  
Of all things human : hear—"Sardanapalus,  
'The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes, 250  
In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.  
Eat, drink, and love ; the rest's not worth a fillip." <sup>1</sup>

1. "For this expedition he took only a small chosen body of the phalanx, but all his light troops. In the first day's march he reached Anchialus, a town said to have been founded by the king of Assyria, Sardanapalus. The fortifications, in their magnitude and extent, still

*Sal.* A worthy moral, and a wise inscription,  
For a king to put up before his subjects !

in Arrian's time, bore the character of greatness, which the Assyrians appear singularly to have affected in works of the kind. A monument representing Sardanapalus was found there, warranted by an inscription in Assyrian characters, of course in the old Assyrian language, which the Greeks, whether well or ill, interpreted thus : 'Sardanapalus, son of Anacyndaraxes, in one day founded Anchialus and Tarsus. Eat, drink, play ; all other human joys are not worth a fillip.' Supposing this version nearly exact (for Arrian says it was not quite so), whether the purpose has not been to invite to civil order a people disposed to turbulence, rather than to recommend immoderate luxury, may perhaps reasonably be questioned. What, indeed, could be the object of a king of Assyria in founding such towns in a country so distant from his capital, and so divided from it by an immense extent of sandy deserts and lofty mountains, and, still more, how the inhabitants could be at once in circumstances to abandon themselves to the intemperate joys which their prince has been supposed to have recommended, is not obvious. But it may deserve observation that, in that line of coast, the southern of Lesser Asia, ruins of cities, evidently of an age after Alexander, yet barely named in history, at this day astonish the adventurous traveller by their magnificence and elegance amid the desolation which, under a singularly barbarian government, has for so many centuries been daily spreading in the finest countries of the globe. Whether more from soil and climate, or from opportunities for commerce, extraordinary means must have been found for communities to flourish there ; whence it may seem that the measures of Sardanapalus were directed by juster views than have been commonly ascribed to him. But that monarch having been the last of a dynasty ended by a revolution, obloquy on his memory would follow of course from the policy of his successors and their partisans. 'The inconsistency of traditions concerning Sardanapalus is striking in Diodorus's account of him.'—MITTFORD'S *Greece*, 1820, ix. 311-313, and note x.

[The story of the sepulchral monument with its cynical inscription rests on the authority of Aristobulus, who served under Alexander, and wrote his history. The passage is quoted by Strabo (lib. xiv. ed. 1808, p. 958), and as follows by Athenæus (lib. xii. cap. 40) in the *Deipnosophista* : 'And Aristobulus says, 'In Anchiale, which was built by Sardanapalus, did Alexander, when he was on his expedition against the Persians, pitch his camp. And at no great distance was the monument of Sardanapalus, on which there is a marble figure putting together the fingers of its right hand, as if it were giving a fillip. And there was on it the following inscription in Assyrian characters :—

'Sardanapalus

The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes,

In one day built Anchiale and Tarsus :

Eat, drink, and love, the rest's not worth e'en this.'

By '*this*' meaning the fillip he was giving with his fingers."

"We may conjecture," says Canon Rawlinson, "that the monument was in reality a stele containing the king [Sennacherib] in an arched frame, with the right hand raised above the left, which is the ordinary attitude, and an inscription commemorating the occasion of its erection" [the conquest of Cilicia and settlement of Tarsus].—*The Five Great Monarchies, etc.*, 1871, ii. 216.]

*Sar.* Oh, thou wouldst have me doubtless set up edicts—

“Obey the king—contribute to his treasure—  
Recruit his phalanx—spill your blood at bidding—  
Fall down and worship, or get up and toil.”

Or thus—“Sardanapalus on this spot

Slew fifty thousand of his enemies.

260

These are their sepulchres, and this his trophy.”

I leave such things to conquerors; enough

For me, if I can make my subjects feel

The weight of human misery less, and glide

Ungroaning to the tomb: I take no license

Which I deny to them. We all are men.

*Sal.* Thy Sires have been revered as Gods—

*Sar.*

In dust

And death, where they are neither Gods nor men.

Talk not of such to me! the worms are Gods;<sup>1</sup>

At least they banqueted upon your Gods,

270

And died for lack of farther nutriment.

Those Gods were merely men; look to their issue—

I feel a thousand mortal things about me,

But nothing godlike,—unless it may be

The thing which you condemn, a disposition

To love and to be merciful, to pardon

The follies of my species, and (that's human)

To be indulgent to my own.

*Sal.*

Alas!

The doom of Nineveh is sealed.—Woe—woe

To the unrivalled city!

*Sar.*

What dost dread?

280

*Sal.* Thou art guarded by thy foes: in a few hours

The tempest may break out which overwhelms thee,

And thine and mine; and in another day

What *is* shall be the past of Belus' race.

*Sar.* What must we dread?

*Sal.*

Ambitious treachery,

Which has environed thee with snares; but yet

There is resource: empower me with thy signet

1. [Compare “Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots.”—*Hamlet*, act iv. sc. 3, lines 21-23.]

To quell the machinations, and I lay  
The heads of thy chief foes before thy feet.

*Sar.* The heads—how many ?

*Sal.* Must I stay to number  
When even thine own's in peril ? Let me go ; 291  
Give me thy signet—trust me with the rest.

*Sar.* I will trust no man with unlimited lives.  
When we take those from others, we nor know  
What we have taken, nor the thing we give.

*Sal.* Wouldst thou not take their lives who seek for  
thine ?

*Sar.* That's a hard question—But I answer, Yes.  
Cannot the thing be done without ? Who are they  
Whom thou suspectest ?—Let them be arrested.

*Sal.* I would thou wouldst not ask me ; the next  
moment 300

Will send my answer through thy babbling troop  
Of paramours, and thence fly o'er the palace,  
Even to the city, and so baffle all.—  
Trust me.

*Sar.* Thou knowest I have done so ever ;  
Take thou the signet. [*Gives the signet.*]

*Sal.* I have one more request.

*Sar.* Name it.

*Sal.* That thou this night forbear the banquet  
In the pavilion over the Euphrates.

*Sar.* Forbear the banquet ! Not for all the plotters  
That ever shook a kingdom ! Let them come,  
And do their worst : I shall not blench for them ; 310  
Nor rise the sooner ; nor forbear the goblet ;  
Nor crown me with a single rose the less ;  
Nor lose one joyous hour.—I fear them not.

*Sal.* But thou wouldst arm thee, wouldst thou not, if  
needful ?

*Sar.* Perhaps. I have the goodliest armour, and  
A sword of such a temper, and a bow,  
And javelin, which might furnish Nimrod forth :  
A little heavy, but yet not unwieldy.  
And now I think on't, 'tis long since I've used them,  
Even in the chase. Hast ever seen them, brother ? 320

*Sal.* Is this a time for such fantastic trifling ?—

If need be, wilt thou wear them?

*Sar.* Will I not?

Oh! if it must be so, and these rash slaves  
Will not be ruled with less, I'll use the sword  
Till they shall wish it turned into a distaff.

*Sal.* They say thy Sceptre's turned to that already.

*Sar.* That's false! but let them say so: the old Greeks,  
Of whom our captives often sing, related  
The same of their chief hero, Hercules,  
Because he loved a Lydian queen: thou seest 330  
The populace of all the nations seize  
Each calumny they can to sink their sovereigns.

*Sal.* They did not speak thus of thy fathers.

*Sar.* No;

They dared not. They were kept to toil and combat;  
And never changed their chains but for their armour:  
Now they have peace and pastime, and the license  
To revel and to rail; it irks me not.

I would not give the smile of one fair girl  
For all the popular breath<sup>1</sup> that e'er divided  
A name from nothing. What are the rank tongues<sup>2</sup> 340  
Of this vile herd, grown insolent with feeding,  
That I should prize their noisy praise, or dread  
Their noisome clamour?

*Sal.* You have said they are men;  
As such their hearts are something.

*Sar.* So my dogs' are;  
And better, as more faithful:—but, proceed;  
Thou hast my signet:—since they are tumultuous,  
Let them be tempered, yet not roughly, till  
Necessity enforce it. I hate all pain,  
Given or received; we have enough within us,  
The meanest vassal as the loftiest monarch, 350  
Not to add to each other's natural burthen

1. [Compare—

“The fickle reek of popular breath.”  
*Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza clxxi. line 2.]

2. [Compare—

“I have not flattered its rank breath.”  
*Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza cxliii. line 2.

Compare, too, Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, act iii. sc. 1, lines 66, 67.]



Of mortal misery, but rather lessen,  
 By mild reciprocal alleviation,  
 The fatal penalties imposed on life :  
 But this they know not, or they will not know.  
 I have, by Baal ! done all I could to soothe them :  
 I made no wars, I added no new imposts,  
 I interfered not with their civic lives,  
 I let them pass their days as best might suit them,  
 Passing my own as suited me.

*Sal.* Thou stopp'st 360  
 Short of the duties of a king ; and therefore  
 They say thou art unfit to be a monarch.

*Sar.* They lie.—Unhappily, I am unfit  
 To be aught save a monarch ; else for me  
 The meanest Mede might be the king instead.

*Sal.* There is one Mede, at least, who seeks to be so.

*Sar.* What mean'st thou !—'tis thy secret ; thou  
 desirest

Few questions, and I'm not of curious nature.  
 Take the fit steps ; and, since necessity  
 Requires, I sanction and support thee. Ne'er 370  
 Was man who more desired to rule in peace  
 The peaceful only : if they rouse me, better  
 They had conjured up stern Nimrod from his ashes,  
 "The Mighty Hunter !" I will turn these realms  
 To one wide desert chase of brutes, who *were*,  
 But *would* no more, by their own choice, be human.  
*What* they have found me, they belie ; *that which*  
 They yet may find me—shall defy their wish  
 To speak it worse ; and let them thank themselves.

*Sal.* Then thou at last canst feel ?

*Sar.* Feel ! who feels not  
 Ingratitude ?<sup>1</sup>

*Sal.* I will not pause to answer 381  
 With words, but deeds. Keep thou awake that energy  
 Which sleeps at times, but is not dead within thee,

1. ["Rode. Winter's wind somewhat more unkind than ingratitude itself, though Shakespeare says otherwise. At least, I am so much more accustomed to meet with ingratitude than the north wind, that I thought the latter the sharper of the two. I had met with both in the course of the twenty-four hours, so could judge."—*Extracts from a Diary*, January 19, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 177.]

And thou may'st yet be glorious in thy reign,  
As powerful in thy realm. Farewell ! [*Exit SALEMENES.*  
*Sar. (solus).* Farewell !

He's gone ; and on his finger bears my signet,  
Which is to him a sceptre. He is stern  
As I am heedless ; and the slaves deserve  
To feel a master. What may be the danger,  
I know not : he hath found it, let him quell it. 390  
Must I consume my life—this little life—  
In guarding against all may make it less ?  
It is not worth so much ! It were to die  
Before my hour, to live in dread of death,  
Tracing revolt ; suspecting all about me,  
Because they are near ; and all who are remote,  
Because they are far. But if it should be so—  
If they should sweep me off from Earth and Empire,  
Why, what is Earth or Empire of the Earth ?  
I have loved, and lived, and multiplied my image ; 400  
To die is no less natural than those  
Acts of this clay ! 'Tis true I have not shed  
Blood as I might have done, in oceans, till  
My name became the synonyme of Death—  
A terror and a trophy. But for this  
I feel no penitence ; my life is love :  
If I must shed blood, it shall be by force.  
Till now, no drop from an Assyrian vein  
Hath flowed for me, nor hath the smallest coin  
Of Nineveh's vast treasures e'er been lavished 410  
On objects which could cost her sons a tear :  
If then they hate me, 'tis because I hate not :  
If they rebel, 'tis because I oppress not.  
Oh, men ! ye must be ruled with scythes, not sceptres,  
And mowed down like the grass, else all we reap  
Is rank abundance, and a rotten harvest  
Of discontents infecting the fair soil,  
Making a desert of fertility.—  
I'll think no more.—Within there, ho !

*Enter an ATTENDANT.*

*Sar.* Slave, tell  
The Ionian Myrrha we would crave her presence. 420  
*Attend.* King, she is here.

MYRRHA enters.

*Sar. (apart to Attendant). Away !*  
(Addressing MYRRHA.) Beautiful being !  
Thou dost almost anticipate my heart ;  
It throbbed for thee, and here thou comest : let me  
Deem that some unknown influence, some sweet oracle,  
Communicates between us, though unseen,  
In absence, and attracts us to each other.

*Myr.* There doth.

*Sar.* I know there doth, but not its name :  
What is it ?

*Myr.* In my native land a God,  
And in my heart a feeling like a God's,  
Exalted ; yet I own 'tis only mortal ;  
For what I feel is humble, and yet happy—  
That is, it would be happy ; but——

430

[MYRRHA pauses.

*Sar.* There comes  
For ever something between us and what  
We deem our happiness : let me remove  
The barrier which that hesitating accent  
Proclaims to thine, and mine is sealed.

*Myr.* My Lord !—

*Sar.* My Lord—my King—Sire—Sovereign ; thus it  
is—

For ever thus, addressed with awe. I ne'er  
Can see a smile, unless in some broad banquet's  
Intoxicating glare, when the buffoons  
Have gorged themselves up to equality,  
Or I have quaffed me down to their abasement.  
Myrrha, I can hear all these things, these names,  
Lord—King—Sire—Monarch—nay, time was I prized  
them ;

440

That is, I suffered them—from slaves and nobles ;  
But when they falter from the lips I love,  
The lips which have been pressed to mine, a chill  
Comes o'er my heart, a cold sense of the falsehood  
Of this my station, which represses feeling  
In those for whom I have felt most, and makes me  
Wish that I could lay down the dull tiara,  
And share a cottage on the Caucasus

450

With thee—and wear no crowns but those of flowers.

*Myr.* Would that we could !

*Sar.* And dost *thou* feel this?—Why ?

*Myr.* Then thou wouldst know what thou canst never know.

*Sar.* And that is——

*Myr.* The true value of a heart ;

At least, a woman's.

*Sar.* I have proved a thousand——

A thousand, and a thousand.

*Myr.* Hearts ?

*Sar.* I think so.

*Myr.* Not one ! the time may come thou may'st.

*Sar.* It will.

Hear, Myrrha ; Salemenes has declared——

460

Or why or how he hath divined it, Belus,

Who founded our great realm, knows more than I——

But Salemenes hath declared my throne

In peril.

*Myr.* He did well.

*Sar.* And say'st *thou* so ?

Thou whom he spurned so harshly, and now dared<sup>1</sup>

Drive from our presence with his savage jeers,

And made thee weep and blush ?

*Myr.* I should do both

More frequently, and he did well to call me

Back to my duty. But thou spakest of peril

Peril to thee——

*Sar.* Aye, from dark plots and snares 470

From Medes—and discontented troops and nations.

I know not what—a labyrinth of things——

A maze of muttered threats and mysteries :

Thou know'st the man—it is his usual custom.

But he is honest. Come, we'll think no more on't——

But of the midnight festival.

*Myr.* 'Tis time

To think of aught save festivals. Thou hast not

Spurned his sage cautions ?

*Sar.* What ?—and dost thou fear ?

<sup>1</sup> — and even dared  
*Profane our presence with his savage jeers.*—[*MS. M.*]

*Myr.* Fear!—I'm a Greek, and how should I fear death?

A slave, and wherefore should I dread my freedom? 480

*Sar.* Then wherefore dost thou turn so pale?

*Myr.*

I love.

*Sar.* And do not I? I love thee far—far more  
Than either the brief life or the wide realm,  
Which, it may be, are menaced;—yet I blench not.

*Myr.* That means thou lovest nor thyself nor me;  
For he who loves another loves himself,  
Even for that other's sake. This is too rash:  
Kingdoms and lives are not to be so lost.

*Sar.* Lost!—why, who is the aspiring chief who dared  
Assume to win them?

*Myr.* Who is he should dread 490  
To try so much? When he who is their ruler  
Forgets himself—will they remember him?

*Sar.* Myrrha!

*Myr.* Frown not upon me: you have smiled  
Too often on me not to make those frowns  
Bitterer to bear than any punishment  
Which they may augur.—King, I am your subject!  
Master, I am your slave! Man, I have loved you!—  
Loved you, I know not by what fatal weakness,  
Although a Greek, and born a foe to monarchs—  
A slave, and hating fetters—an Ionian, 500  
And, therefore, when I love a stranger, more  
Degraded by that passion than by chains!  
Still I have loved you. If that love were strong  
Enough to overcome all former nature,  
Shall it not claim the privilege to save you?

*Sar.* Save me, my beauty! Thou art very fair,  
And what I seek of thee is love—not safety.

*Myr.* And without love where dwells security?

*Sar.* I speak of woman's love.

*Myr.* The very first  
Of human life must spring from woman's breast, 510  
Your first small words are taught you from her lips,  
Your first tears quenched by her, and your last sighs  
Too often breathed out in a woman's hearing,  
When men have shrunk from the ignoble care

Of watching the last hour of him who led them.

*Sar.* My eloquent Ionian ! thou speak'st music :  
The very chorus of the tragic song  
I have heard thee talk of as the favourite pastime  
Of thy far father-land. Nay, weep not—calm thee.

*Myr.* I weep not.—But I pray thee, do not speak 520  
About my fathers or their land.

*Sar.* Yet oft  
*Thou* speakest of them.

*Myr.* True—true : constant thought  
Will overflow in words unconsciously ;  
But when another speaks of Greeks, it wounds me.

*Sar.* Well, then, how wouldst thou *save* me, as thou  
saidst ?

*Myr.* By teaching thee to save thyself, and not  
Thyself alone, but these vast realms, from all  
The rage of the worst war—the war of brethren.

*Sar.* Why, child, I loathe all war, and warriors ;  
I live in peace and pleasure : what can man 530  
Do more ?

*Myr.* Alas ! my Lord, with common men  
There needs too oft the show of war to keep  
The substance of sweet peace ; and, for a king,  
'Tis sometimes better to be feared than loved.

*Sar.* And I have never sought but for the last.

*Myr.* And now art neither.

*Sar.* Dost *thou* say so, Myrrha ?

*Myr.* I speak of civic popular love, *self-love*,  
Which means that men are kept in awe and law,  
Yet not oppressed—at least they must not think so,  
Or, if they think so, deem it necessary, 540  
To ward off worse oppression, their own passions.  
A King of feasts, and flowers, and wine, and revel,  
And love, and mirth, was never King of Glory.

*Sar.* Glory !—what's that ?

*Myr.* Ask of the Gods thy fathers.

*Sar.* They cannot answer ; when the priests speak for  
them,\*

'Tis for some small addition to the temple.

*Myr.* Look to the annals of thine Empire's founders.

*Sar.* They are so blotted o'er with blood, I cannot.

But what wouldst have ? the Empire *has been* founded.  
I cannot go on multiplying empires. 550

*Myr.* Preserve thine own.

*Sar.* At least, I will enjoy it.  
Come, Myrrha, let us go on to the Euphrates :  
The hour invites, the galley is prepared,  
And the pavilion, decked for our return,  
In fit adornment for the evening banquet,  
Shall blaze with beauty and with light, until  
It seems unto the stars which are above us  
Itself an opposite star ; and we will sit  
Crowned with fresh flowers like——

*Myr.*

Victims,

*Sar.* No, like sovereigns,  
The Shepherd Kings of patriarchal times, 560  
Who knew no brighter gems than summer wreaths,<sup>i</sup>  
And none but tearless triumphs. Let us on.

*Enter PANIA.*

*Pan.* May the King live for ever !

*Sar.* Not an hour  
Longer than he can love. How my soul hates  
This language, which makes life itself a lie,  
Flattering dust with eternity.<sup>ii</sup> Well, Pania !  
Be brief.

*Pan.* I am charged by Salemenes to  
Reiterate his prayer unto the King,  
That for this day, at least, he will not quit  
The palace : when the General returns, 570  
He will adduce such reasons as will warrant  
His daring, and perhaps obtain the pardon  
Of his presumption.

*Sar.* What ! am I then coop'd ?  
Already captive ? can I not even breathe  
The breath of heaven ? Tell prince Salemenes,  
Were all Assyria raging round the walls  
In mutinous myriads, I would still go forth.

*Pan.* I must obey, and yet——

i. *Who loved no gems so well as those of nature.*—[*MS. M.*]

ii. *Wishing eternity to dust*———[*MS. M.*]

*Myr.* Oh, Monarch, listen.—  
How many a day and moon thou hast reclined  
Within these palace walls in silken dalliance, 580  
And never shown thee to thy people's longing ;  
Leaving thy subjects' eyes ungratified,  
The satraps uncontrolled, the Gods unworshipped,  
And all things in the anarchy of sloth,  
Till all, save evil, slumbered through the realm !  
And wilt thou not now tarry for a day,—  
A day which may redeem thee ? Wilt thou not  
Yield to the few still faithful a few hours,  
For them, for thee, for thy past fathers' race,  
And for thy sons' inheritance ?

*Pan.* 'Tis true ! 590  
From the deep urgency with which the Prince  
Despatched me to your sacred presence, I  
Must dare to add my feeble voice to that  
Which now has spoken.

*Sar.* No, it must not be.

*Myr.* For the sake of thy realm !

*Sar.* Away !

*Pan.* For that  
Of all thy faithful subjects, who will rally  
Round thee and thine.

*Sar.* These are mere fantasies :  
There is no peril :—'tis a sullen scheme  
Of Salemenes, to approve his zeal,  
And show himself more necessary to us. 600

*Myr.* By all that's good and glorious take this counsel.

*Sar.* Business to-morrow.

*Myr.* Aye—or death to-night.

*Sar.* Why let it come then unexpectedly,  
'Midst joy and gentleness, and mirth and love ;  
So let me fall like the plucked rose !—far better  
Thus than be withered.

*Myr.* Then thou wilt not yield,  
Even for the sake of all that ever stirred  
A monarch into action, to forego  
A trifling revel.

*Sar.* No.

*Myr.* Then yield for *mine* ;



For my sake !

*Sar.* Thine, my Myrrha !

*Myr.* 'Tis the first 610  
Boon which I ever asked Assyria's king.

*Sar.* That's true, and, wer't my kingdom, must be granted.

Well, for thy sake, I yield me. Pania, hence !  
Thou hear'st me.

*Pan.* And obey. [Exit PANIA.

*Sar.* I marvel at thee.

What is thy motive, Myrrha, thus to urge me ?

*Myr.* Thy safety ; and the certainty that nought  
Could urge the Prince thy kinsman to require  
Thus much from thee, but some impending danger.

*Sar.* And if I do not dread it, why shouldst thou ?

*Myr.* Because *thou* dost not fear, I fear for *thee*. 620

*Sar.* To-morrow thou wilt smile at these vain fancies.

*Myr.* If the worst come, I shall be where none weep,  
And that is better than the power to smile.  
And thou ?

*Sar.* I shall be King, as heretofore.

*Myr.* Where ?

*Sar.* With Baal, Nimrod, and Semiramis,  
Sole in Assyria, or with them elsewhere.  
Fate made me what I am—may make me nothing—  
But either that or nothing must I be :  
I will not live degraded.

*Myr.* Hadst thou felt

Thus always, none would ever dare degrade thee. 630

*Sar.* And who will do so now ?

*Myr.* Dost thou suspect none ?

*Sar.* Suspect !—that's a spy's office. Oh ! we lose  
Ten thousand precious moments in vain words,  
And vainer fears. Within there !—ye slaves, deck  
The Hall of Nimrod for the evening revel ;  
If I must make a prison of our palace,  
At least we'll wear our fetters jocundly ;  
If the Euphrates be forbid us, and  
The summer-dwelling on its beauteous border,  
Here we are still unmenaced. Ho ! within there ! 640  
[Exit SARDANAPALUS.

*Myr. (solus).* Why do I love this man? My country's daughters  
Love none but heroes. But I have no country !  
The slave hath lost all save her bonds. I love him ;  
And that's the heaviest link of the long chain—  
To love whom we esteem not. Be it so :  
The hour is coming when he'll need all love,  
And find none. To fall from him now were baser  
Than to have stabbed him on his throne when highest  
Would have been noble in my country's creed :  
I was not made for either. Could I save him, 650  
I should not love *him* better, but myself ;  
And I have need of the last, for I have fallen  
In my own thoughts, by loving this soft stranger :  
And yet, methinks, I love him more, perceiving  
That he is hated of his own barbarians,  
The natural foes of all the blood of Greece.  
Could I but wake a single thought like those  
Which even the Phrygians felt when battling long  
'Twixt Ilion and the sea, within his heart,  
He would tread down the barbarous crowds, and triumph.  
He loves me, and I love him ; the slave loves 661  
Her master, and would free him from his vices.  
If not, I have a means of freedom still,  
And if I cannot teach him how to reign,  
May show him how alone a King can leave  
His throne. I must not lose him from my sight. [*Exit.*

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Portal of the same Hall of the Palace.*

*Beleses (solus).* The Sun goes down : methinks he sets  
more slowly,  
Taking his last look of Assyria's Empire.  
How red he glares amongst those deepening clouds,  
Like the blood he predicts. If not in vain,  
Thou Sun that sinkest, and ye stars which rise,

I have outwatched ye, reading ray by ray  
 The edicts of your orbs, which make 'Time tremble'<sup>i</sup>  
 For what he brings the nations, 'tis the furthest  
 Hour of Assyria's years. And yet how calm!  
 An earthquake should announce so great a fall— 10  
 A summer's sun discloses it. Yon disk,  
 To the star-read Chaldean, bears upon  
 Its everlasting page the end of what  
 Seemed everlasting; but oh! thou true Sun!  
 The burning oracle of all that live,  
 As fountain of all life, and symbol of  
 Him who bestows it, wherefore dost thou limit  
 Thy lore unto calamity? Why not  
 Unfold the rise of days more worthy thine  
 All-glorious burst from ocean? why not dart 20  
 A beam of hope athwart the future years,  
 As of wrath to its days? Hear me! oh, hear me!  
 I am thy worshipper, thy priest, thy servant—  
 I have gazed on thee at thy rise and fall,  
 And bowed my head beneath thy mid-day beams,  
 When my eye dared not meet thee. I have watched  
 For thee, and after thee, and prayed to thee,  
 And sacrificed to thee, and read, and feared thee,  
 And asked of thee, and thou hast answered—-but  
 Only to thus much: while I speak, he sinks— 30  
 Is gone—and leaves his beauty, not his knowledge,  
 To the delighted West, which revels in  
 Its hues of dying glory. Yet what is  
 Death, so it be but glorious? 'Tis a sunset;  
 And mortals may be happy to resemble  
 The Gods but in decay.

*Enter ARBACES by an inner door.*

*Arb.* Belesces, why  
 So wrapt in thy devotions? Dost thou stand  
 Gazing to trace thy disappearing God  
 Into some realm of undiscovered day?  
 Our business is with night—'tis come.

i. *Each twinkle unto which Time trembles, and Nations grow nothing* —.—[*MS. Af. erased.*]

*Bel.* But not 40  
Gone.

*Arb.* Let it roll on—we are ready.

*Bel.* Yes.  
Would it were over !

*Arb.* Does the prophet doubt,  
To whom the very stars shine Victory ?

*Bel.* I do not doubt of Victory—but the Victor.

*Arb.* Well, let thy science settle that. Meantime  
I have prepared as many glittering spears  
As will out-sparkle our allies—your planets.  
There is no more to thwart us. The she-king,  
That less than woman, is even now upon  
The waters with his female mates. The order 50  
Is issued for the feast in the pavilion.  
The first cup which he drains will be the last  
Quaffed by the line of Nimrod.

*Bel.* 'Twas a brave one.

*Arb.* And is a weak one—'tis worn out—we'll mend it.

*Bel.* Art sure of that ?

*Arb.* Its founder was a hunter—  
I am a soldier—what is there to fear ?

*Bel.* The soldier.

*Arb.* And the priest, it may be : but  
If you thought thus, or think, why not retain  
Your king of concubines ? why stir me up ?  
Why spur me to this enterprise ? your own 60  
No less than mine ?

*Bel.* Look to the sky !

*Arb.* I look.

*Bel.* What seest thou ?

*Arb.* A fair summer's twilight, and  
The gathering of the stars.

*Bel.* And midst them, mark  
Yon earliest, and the brightest, which so quivers,  
As it would quit its place in the blue ether.

*Arb.* Well ?

*Bel.* 'Tis thy natal ruler—thy birth planet.

*Arb.* (*touching his scabbard*). My star is in this scabbard :  
when it shines,  
It shall out-dazzle comets. Let us think

Of what is to be done to justify  
 Thy planets and their portents. When we conquer, 70  
 They shall have temples—aye, and priests—and thou  
 Shalt be the pontiff of—what Gods thou wilt ;  
 For I observe that they are ever just,  
 And own the bravest for the most devout.

*Bel.* Aye, and the most devout for brave—thou hast not  
 Seen me turn back from battle.

*Arb.* No ; I own thee  
 As firm in fight as Babylonia's captain,  
 As skilful in Chaldea's worship : now,  
 Will it but please thee to forget the priest,  
 And be the warrior ?

*Bel.* Why not both ?

*Arb.* The better ; 80  
 And yet it almost shames me, we shall have  
 So little to effect. This woman's warfare  
 Degrades the very conqueror. 'To have plucked  
 A bold and bloody despot from his throne,  
 And grappled with him, clashing steel with steel,  
 That were heroic or to win or fall ;  
 But to upraise my sword against this silkworm,<sup>1</sup>  
 And hear him whine, it may be—

*Bel.* Do not deem it :  
 He has that in him which may make you strife yet ;  
 And were he all you think, his guards are hardy, 90  
 And headed by the cool, stern Salemenes.

*Arb.* They'll not resist.

*Bel.* Why not ? they are soldiers.

*Arb.* True,  
 And therefore need a soldier to command them.

*Bel.* That Salemenes is.

*Arb.* But not their King.  
 Besides, he hates the effeminate thing that governs,  
 For the Queen's sake, his sister. Mark you not  
 He keeps aloof from all the revels ?

*Bel.* But  
 Not from the council—there he is ever constant.

*Arb.* And ever thwarted : what would you have more

1. [Compare "these swoln silkworms," *Marino Faliero*, act ii. sc. 2, line 115, *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 386, note 4.]

To make a rebel out of? A fool reigning,  
His blood dishonoured, and himself disdained : 100  
Why, it is *his* revenge we work for.

*Bel.* Could  
He but be brought to think so : this I doubt of.

*Arb.* What, if we sound him?

*Bel.* Yes—if the time served.

*Enter BALEA.*

*Bal.* Satraps ! The king commands your presence at  
The feast to-night.

*Bel.* To hear is to obey.  
In the pavilion ?

*Bal.* No ; here in the palace.

*Arb.* How ! in the palace ? it was not thus ordered.

*Bal.* It is so ordered now.

*Arb.* And why ?

*Bal.* I know not.

May I retire ?

*Arb.* Stay.

*Bel. (to Arb. aside).* Hush ! let him go his way. 110  
(*Alternately to Bal.*) Yes, Balea, thank the Monarch, kiss  
the hem

Of his imperial robe, and say, his slaves  
Will take the crumbs he deigns to scatter from  
His royal table at the hour—was't midnight ?

*Bal.* It was : the place, the hall of Nimrod. Lords,  
I humble me before you, and depart. [*Exit BALEA.*]

*Arb.* I like not this same sudden change of place ;  
There is some mystery : wherefore should he change it ?

*Bel.* Doth he not change a thousand times a day ?  
Sloth is of all things the most fanciful— 120  
And moves more parasangs in its intents

Than generals in their marches, when they seek  
To leave their foe at fault.—Why dost thou muse ?

*Arb.* He loved that gay pavilion,—it was ever  
His summer dotage.

*Bel.* And he loved his Queen —  
And thrice a thousand harlotry besides—  
And he has loved all things by turns, except

Wisdom and Glory.

*Arb.* Still—I like it not.  
If he has changed—why, so must we : the attack  
Were easy in the isolated bower,  
Beset with drowsy guards and drunken courtiers ; 130  
But in the hall of Nimrod——

*Bel.* Is it so ?  
Methought the haughty soldier feared to mount  
A throne too easily—does it disappoint thee  
To find there is a slipperier step or two  
Than what was counted on ?

*Arb.* When the hour comes,  
Thou shalt perceive how far I fear or no.  
Thou hast seen my life at stake—and gaily played for :  
But here is more upon the die—a kingdom.

*Bel.* I have foretold already—thou wilt win it : 140  
Then on, and prosper.

*Arb.* Now were I a soothsayer,  
I would have boded so much to myself.  
But be the stars obeyed—I cannot quarrel  
With them, nor their interpreter. Who's here ?

*Enter SALEMENES.*

*Sal.* Satraps !

*Bel.* My Prince !

*Sal.* Well met—I sought ye both,  
But elsewhere than the palace.

*Arb.* Wherefore so ?

*Sal.* 'Tis not the hour.

*Arb.* The hour !—what hour ?

*Sal.* Of midnight.

*Bel.* Midnight, my Lord !

*Sal.* What, are you not invited ?

*Bel.* Oh ! yes—we had forgotten.

*Sal.* Is it usual  
Thus to forget a Sovereign's invitation ? 150

*Arb.* Why—we but now received it.

*Sal.* Then why here ?

*Arb.* On duty.

*Sal.* On what duty ?

*Bel.* On the state's.

We have the privilege to approach the presence ;  
But found the Monarch absent.<sup>i</sup>

*Sal.* And I too  
Am upon duty.

*Arb.* May we crave its purport?

*Sal.* To arrest two traitors. Guards ! Within there !

*Enter Guards.*

*Sal. (continuing).* Satraps,  
Your swords.

*Bel. (delivering his).* My lord, behold my scimitar.

*Arb. (drawing his sword).* Take mine.

*Sal. (advancing).* I will.

*Arb.* But in your heart the blade—  
The hilt quits not this hand.<sup>ii</sup>

*Sal. (drawing).* How ! dost thou brave me ?

'Tis well—this saves a trial, and false mercy. 160  
Soldiers, hew down the rebel !

*Arb.* Soldiers ! Aye—  
Alone you dare not.

*Sal.* Alone ! foolish slave—  
What is there in thee that a Prince should shrink from  
Of open force ? We dread thy treason, not  
Thy strength : thy tooth is nought without its venom—  
The serpent's, not the lion's. Cut him down.

*Bel. (interposing).* Arbaces ! Are you mad ? Have I  
not rendered

My sword ? Then trust like me our Sovereign's justice.

*Arb.* No—I will sooner trust the stars thou prat'st of,  
And this slight arm, and die a king at least 170  
Of my own breath and body—so far that  
None else shall chain them.

*Sal. (to the Guards).* You hear him and me.  
Take him not,—kill.

[*The Guards attack ARBACES, who defends himself  
valiantly and dexterously till they waver.*]

i. But found the Monarch claimed his privacy.—[MS. M. erased.]

ii. — not else

—It quits this living hand.—[MS. M. erased.]



*Sal.* Is it even so ; and must  
I do the hangman's office ? Recreants ! see  
How you should fell a traitor.

[SALEMENES attacks ARBACES.

• *Enter SARDANAPALUS and Train.*

*Sar.* Hold your hands—  
Upon your lives, I say. What, deaf or drunken ?  
My sword ! O fool, I wear no sword : here, fellow,  
Give me thy weapon. [To a Guard.

[SARDANAPALUS snatches a sword from one of the  
soldiers, and rushes between the combatants—they  
separate.

*Sar.* In my very palace !  
What hinders me from cleaving you in twain,  
Audacious brawlers ?

*Bel.* Sire, your justice.

*Sal.* Or— 180  
Your weakness.

*Sar.* (raising the sword). How ?

*Sal.* Strike ! so the blow's repeated  
Upon yon traitor—whom you spare a moment,  
I trust, for torture—I'm content.

*Sar.* What—him !  
Who dares assail Arbaces ?

*Sal.* I !

*Sar.* Indeed !  
Prince, you forget yourself. Upon what warrant ?

*Sal.* (showing the signet). Thine.

*Arb.* (confused). The King's !

*Sal.* Yes ! and let the King confirm it.

*Sar.* I parted not from this for such a purpose.

*Sal.* You parted with it for your safety—I  
Employed it for the best. Pronounce in person.  
Here I am but your slave—a moment past 190  
I was your representative.

*Sar.* Then sheathe  
Your swords.

[ARBACES and SALEMENES return their swords to the  
scabbards.

*Sal.* Mine's sheathed : I pray you sheathe *not* yours :  
'Tis the sole sceptre left you now with safety.

*Sar.* A heavy one ; the hilt, too, hurts my hand.  
(*To a Guard.*) Here, fellow, take thy weapon back. Well,  
sirs,

What doth this mean ?

*Bel.* The Prince must answer that.

*Sal.* Truth upon my part, treason upon theirs.

*Sar.* Treason—Arbaces ! treachery and Beleses !  
That were an union I will not believe.

*Bel.* Where is the proof ?

*Sal.* I'll answer that, if once 200  
The king demands your fellow-traitor's sword.

*Arb.* (*to Sal.*). A sword which hath been drawn as oft  
as thine  
Against his foes.

*Sal.* And now against his brother,  
And in an hour or so against himself.

*Sar.* That is not possible : he dared not ; no—  
No—I'll not hear of such things. These vain bickerings  
Are spawned in courts by base intrigues, and baser  
Hirelings, who live by lies on good men's lives.  
You must have been deceived, my brother.

*Sal.* First  
Let him deliver up his weapon, and 210  
Proclaim himself your subject by that duty,  
And I will answer all.

*Sar.* Why, if I thought so—  
But no, it cannot be : the Mede Arbaces—  
The trusty, rough, true soldier—the best captain  
Of all who discipline our nations—No,  
I'll not insult him thus, to bid him render  
The scimitar to me he never yielded  
Unto our enemies. Chief, keep your weapon.

*Sal.* (*delivering back the signet*). Monarch, take back  
your signet.

*Sar.* No, retain it ;  
But use it with more moderation.

*Sal.* Sire, 220  
I used it for your honour, and restore it  
Because I cannot keep it with my own.

Bestow it on Arbaces.

*Sar.*

So I should :

He never asked it.

*Sal.*

Doubt not, he will have it,  
Without that hollow semblance of respect.

*Bel.* I know not what hath prejudiced the Prince  
So strongly 'gainst two subjects, than whom none  
Have been more zealous for Assyria's weal.

*Sal.* Peace, factious priest, and faithless soldier ! thou  
Unit'st in thy own person the worst vices 230  
Of the most dangerous orders of mankind.  
Keep thy smooth words and juggling homilies  
For those who know thee not. Thy fellow's sin  
Is, at the least, a bold one, and not tempered  
By the tricks taught thee in Chaldea.

*Bel.*

Hear him,

My liege—the son of Belus ! he blasphemeth  
The worship of the land, which bows the knee  
Before your fathers.

*Sar.*

Oh ! for that I pray you  
Let him have absolution. I dispense with  
The worship of dead men ; feeling that I 240  
Am mortal, and believing that the race  
From whence I sprung are—what I see them—ashes.

*Bel.* King ! Do not deem so : they are with the stars,  
And——

*Sar.* You shall join them ere they will rise,  
If you preach farther—Why, *this* is rank treason.

*Sal.* My lord !

*Sar.* To school me in the worship of  
Assyria's idols ! Let him be released—  
Give him his sword.

*Sal.*

My Lord, and King, and Brother,  
I pray ye pause.

*Sar.*

Yes, and be sermonised,  
And dinned, and deafened with dead men and Baal, 250  
And all Chaldea's starry mysteries.

*Bel.* Monarch ! respect them.

*Sar.*

Oh ! for that—I love them ;  
I love to watch them in the deep blue vault,  
And to compare them with my Myrrha's eyes ;

I love to see their rays redoubled in  
The tremulous silver of Euphrates' wave,  
As the light breeze of midnight crisps the broad  
And rolling water, sighing through the sedges  
Which fringe his banks : but whether they may be  
Gods, as some say, or the abodes of Gods, 260  
As others hold, or simply lamps of night,  
Worlds—or the lights of Worlds—I know nor care not.  
There's something sweet in my uncertainty  
I would not change for your Chaldean lore ;  
Besides, I know of these all clay can know  
Of aught above it, or below it—nothing.  
I see their brilliancy and feel their beauty—<sup>1</sup>  
When they shine on my grave I shall know neither.

*Bel.* For *neither*, Sire, say *better*.

*Sar.* I will wait,  
If it so please you, Pontiff, for that knowledge. 270  
In the mean time receive your sword, and know  
That I prefer your service militant  
Unto your ministry—not loving either.

*Sal.* (*aside*). His lusts have made him mad. Then  
must I save him,  
Spite of himself.

*Sar.* Please you to hear me, Satraps !  
And chiefly thou, my priest, because I doubt thee  
More than the soldier ; and would doubt thee all  
Wert thou not half a warrior : let us part  
In peace—I'll not say pardon—which must be  
Earned by the guilty ; this I'll not pronounce ye, 280  
Although upon this breath of mine depends  
Your own ; and, deadlier for ye, on my fears.  
But fear not—for that I am soft, not fearful—  
And so live on. Were I the thing some think me,  
Your heads would now be dripping the last drops  
Of their attainted gore from the high gates  
Of this our palace, into the dry dust,  
Their only portion of the coveted kingdom  
They would be crowned to reign o'er—let that pass.  
As I have said, I will not *deem* ye guilty, 290  
Nor *doom* ye guiltless. Albeit better men

i. *I know them beautiful, and see them brilliant.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

Than ye or I stand ready to arraign you ;  
 And should I leave your fate to sterner judges,  
 And proofs of all kinds, I might sacrifice  
 Two men, who, whatsoe'er they now are, were  
 Once honest. Ye are free, sirs.

*Arb.* Sire, this clemency——

*Bel. (interrupting him).* Is worthy of yourself ; and,  
 although innocent,

We thank——

*Sar.* Priest ! keep your thanksgivings for Belus ;  
 His offspring needs none.

*Bel.* But being innocent——

*Sar.* Be silent.—Guilt is loud. If ye are loyal, 300  
 Ye are injured men, and should be sad, not grateful.

*Bel.* So we should be, were justice always done  
 By earthly power omnipotent ; but Innocence  
 Must oft receive her right as a mere favour.

*Sar.* That's a good sentence for a homily,  
 Though not for this occasion. Prithce keep it  
 To plead thy Sovereign's cause before his people.

*Bel.* I trust there is no cause.

*Sar.* No cause, perhaps ;  
 But many causers :—if ye meet with such  
 In the exercise of your inquisitive function 310  
 On earth, or should you read of it in heaven  
 In some mysterious twinkle of the stars,  
 Which are your chronicles, I pray you note,  
 That there are worse things betwixt earth and heaven  
 Than him who ruleth many and slays none ;  
 And, hating not himself, yet loves his fellows  
 Enough to spare even those who would not spare him  
 Were they once masters—but that's doubtful. Satraps !  
 Your swords and persons are at liberty  
 To use them as ye will—but from this hour 320  
 I have no call for either. Salmenes !  
 Follow me.

[*Exeunt SARDANAPALUS, SALEMENES, and the Train,*  
*etc., leaving ARBACES and BELESES.*

*Arb.* Beleses !

*Bel.* Now, what think you ?

*Arb.* That we are lost.

*Bel.* That we have won the kingdom.

*Arb.* What? thus suspected—with the sword slung  
o'er us

But by a single hair, and that still wavering,  
To be blown down by his imperious breath  
Which spared us—why, I know not.

*Bel.* Seek not why ;

But let us profit by the interval.<sup>1</sup>

The hour is still our own—our power the same—  
The night the same we destined. He hath changed 330  
Nothing except our ignorance of all  
Suspicion into such a certainty  
As must make madness of delay.

*Arb.* And yet——

*Bel.* What, doubting still ?

*Arb.* He spared our lives, nay, more,  
Saved them from Salemenes.

*Bel.* And how long  
Will he so spare ? till the first drunken minute.

*Arb.* Or sober, rather. Yet he did it nobly ;  
Gave royally what we had forfeited  
Basely——

*Bel.* Say bravely.

*Arb.* Somewhat of both, perhaps—  
But it has touched me, and, whate'er betide, 340  
I will no further on.

*Bel.* And lose the world !

*Arb.* Lose any thing except my own esteem.

*Bel.* I blush that we should owe our lives to such  
A king of distaffs !

*Arb.* But no less we owe them ;  
And I should blush far more to take the grantor's !<sup>1</sup>

*Bel.* Thou may'st endure whate'er thou wilt—the stars  
Have written otherwise.

*Arb.* Though they came down,  
And marshalled me the way in all their brightness,  
I would not follow.

i. — by the foolish confidence.—[MS. M. erased.]

1. [The first edition reads "grantor." In the MS. the word may be either "granter" or "grantor." "Grantor" is a technical term, in law, for one "who grants a conveyance."]

*Bel.* This is weakness—worse  
Than a scared beldam's dreaming of the dead, 350  
And waking in the dark.—Go to—go to.

*Arb.* Methought he looked like Nimrod as he spoke,  
Even as the proud imperial statue stands  
Looking the monarch of the kings around it,  
And sways, while they but ornament, the temple.

*Bel.* I told you that you had too much despised him,  
And that there was some royalty within him—  
What then? he is the nobler foe.

*Arb.* But we  
The meaner.—Would he had not spared us!

*Bel.* So—  
Wouldst thou be sacrificed thus readily? 360

*Arb.* No—but it had been better to have died  
Than live ungrateful.

*Bel.* Oh, the souls of some men!  
Thou wouldst digest what some call treason, and  
Fools treachery—and, behold, upon the sudden,  
Because for something or for nothing, this  
Rash reveller steps, ostentatiously,  
'Twixt thee and Salemenes, thou art turned  
Into—what shall I say?—Sardanapalus!  
I know no name more ignominious.

*Arb.* But  
An hour ago, who dared to term me such 370  
Had held his life but lightly—as it is,  
I must forgive you, even as he forgave us—  
Semiramis herself would not have done it.

*Bel.* No—the Queen liked no sharers of the kingdom,  
Not even a husband.<sup>1</sup>

*Arb.* I must serve him truly—

*Bel.* And humbly?

*Arb.* No, sir, proudly—being honest.  
I shall be nearer thrones than you to heaven;  
And if not quite so haughty, yet more lofty.  
You may do your own deeming—you have codes,

1. [According to *Ælian, Var. Hist.*, vii. 1, Semiramis, having obtained from her husband permission to rule over Asia for five days, thrust him into a dungeon, and obtained the sovereign power for herself (ed. Paris, 1858, p. 355).]

And mysteries, and corollaries of  
Right and wrong, which I lack for my direction,  
And must pursue but what a plain heart teaches.  
And now you know me. 380

*Bel.* Have you finished?

*Arb.* Yes—

With you.

*Bel.* And would, perhaps, betray as well  
As quit me?

*Arb.* That's a sacerdotal thought,  
And not a soldier's.

*Bel.* Be it what you will—  
Truce with these wranglings, and but hear me.

*Arb.* No—  
There is more peril in your subtle spirit  
Than in a phalanx.

*Bel.* If it must be so—  
I'll on alone.

*Arb.* Alone!

*Bel.* Thrones hold but one. 390

*Arb.* But this is filled.

*Bel.* With worse than vacancy—  
A despised monarch. Look to it, Arbaces :  
I have still aided, cherished, loved, and urged you ;  
Was willing even to serve you, in the hope  
To serve and save Assyria. Heaven itself  
Seemed to consent, and all events were friendly,  
Even to the last, till that your spirit shrunk  
Into a shallow softness ; but now, rather  
Than see my country languish, I will be  
Her saviour or the victim of her tyrant— 400  
Or one or both—for sometimes both are one ;  
And if I win—Arbaces is my servant.

*Arb.* Your servant !

*Bel.* Why not ? better than be slave,  
The *pardoned* slave of *she* Sardanapalus !

*Enter PANIA.*

*Pan.* My Lords, I bear an order from the king.

*Arb.* It is obeyed ere spoken.



*Bel.* Notwithstanding,  
Let's hear it.

*Pan.* Forthwith, on this very night,  
Repair to your respective satrapies  
Of Babylon and Media.

*Bel.* With our troops?

*Pan.* My order is unto the Satraps and 410  
Their household train.

*Arb.* But——

*Bel.* It must be obeyed :  
Say, we depart.

*Pan.* My order is to see you  
Depart, and not to bear your answer.

*Bel. (aside).* Aye !<sup>1</sup>  
Well, Sir—we will accompany you hence.

*Pan.* I will retire to marshal forth the guard  
Of honour which befits your rank, and wait  
Your leisure, so that it the hour exceeds not.

[*Exit PANIA.*]

*Bel.* Now then obey !

*Arb.* Doubtless.

*Bel.* Yes, to the gates  
That grate the palace, which is now our prison—  
No further.

*Arb.* Thou hast harped the truth indeed ! 420  
The realm itself, in all its wide extension,  
Yawns dungeons at each step for thee and me.

*Bel.* Graves !

*Arb.* If I thought so, this good sword should dig  
One more than mine.

*Bel.* It shall have work enough.  
Let me hope better than thou augurest ;  
At present, let us hence as best we may.  
Thou dost agree with me in understanding  
This order as a sentence ?

*Arb.* Why, what other  
Interpretation should it bear ? it is  
The very policy of Orient monarchs— 430  
Pardon and poison—favours and a sword—

i. *Aye—that's earnest !*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

A distant voyage, and an eternal sleep.  
How many Satraps in his father's time—  
For he I own is, or at least *was*, bloodless—

*Bel.* But *will* not—*can* not be so now.

*Arb.* I doubt it.

How many Satraps have I seen set out  
In his Sire's day for mighty Vice-royalties,  
Whose tombs are on their path! I know not how,  
But they all sickened by the way, it was  
So long and heavy.

*Bel.* Let us but regain 440  
The free air of the city, and we'll shorten  
The journey.

*Arb.* 'Twill be shortened at the gates,  
It may be.

*Bel.* No; they hardly will risk that.  
They mean us to die privately, but not  
Within the palace or the city walls,  
Where we are known, and may have partisans:  
If they had meant to slay us here, we were  
No longer with the living. Let us hence.

*Arb.* If I but thought he did not mean my life—

*Bel.* Fool! hence—what else should despotism  
alarmed 450  
Mean? Let us but rejoin our troops, and march.

*Arb.* Towards our provinces?

*Bel.* No; towards your kingdom.  
There's time—there's heart, and hope, and power, and  
means—

Which their half measures leave us in full scope.—  
Away!

*Arb.* And I even yet repenting must  
Relapse to guilt!

*Bel.* Self-defence is a virtue,  
Sole bulwark of all right. Away, I say!  
Let's leave this place, the air grows thick and choking,  
And the walls have a scent of night-shade—hence!  
Let us not leave them time for further council. 460  
Our quick departure proves our civic zeal;  
Our quick departure hinders our good escort,  
The worthy Pania, from anticipating

The orders of some parasangs from hence :  
 Nay, there 's no other choice, but —— hence, I say.<sup>1</sup>  
*[Exit with ARBACES, who follows reluctantly.]*

*Enter SARDANAPALUS and SALEMENES.*

*Sar.* Well, all is remedied, and without bloodshed,  
 That worst of mockeries of a remedy ;  
 We are now secure by these men's exile.

*Sal.* Yes,  
 As he who treads on flowers is from the adder  
 Twined round their roots.

*Sar.* Why, what wouldst have me do ? 470

*Sal.* Undo what you have done.

*Sar.* Revoke my pardon ?

*Sal.* Replace the crown now tottering on your temples.

*Sar.* That were tyrannical.

*Sal.* But sure.

*Sar.* We are so.  
 What danger can they work upon the frontier ?

*Sal.* They are not there yet—never should they be so,  
 Were I well listened to.

*Sar.* Nay, I *have* listened  
 Impartially to thee—why not to them ?

*Sal.* You may know that hereafter ; as it is,  
 I take my leave to order forth the guard.

*Sar.* And you will join us at the banquet ?

*Sal.* Sire, 480  
 Dispense with me—I am no wassailer :

Command me in all service save the Bacchant's.

*Sar.* Nay, but 'tis fit to revel now and then.

*Sal.* And fit that some should watch for those who revel  
 Too oft. Am I permitted to depart ?

*Sar.* Yes—Stay a moment, my good Salemenes,  
 My brother—my best subject—better Prince  
 Than I am King. You should have been the monarch,  
 And I—I know not what, and care not ; but  
 Think not I am insensible to all  
 Thine honest wisdom, and thy rough yet kind,  
 Though oft-reproving sufferance of my follies. 490

i. *Nay, if thou wilt not ——.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

If I have spared these men against thy counsel,  
That is, their lives—it is not that I doubt  
The advice was sound ; but, let them live : we will not  
Cavil about their lives—so let them mend them.  
Their banishment will leave me still sound sleep,  
Which their death had not left me.

*Sal.* Thus you run  
The risk to sleep for ever, to save traitors—  
A moment's pang now changed for years of crime. 500  
Still let them be made quiet.

*Sar.* Tempt me not ;  
My word is past.

*Sal.* But it may be recalled.

*Sar.* 'Tis royal.

*Sal.* And should therefore be decisive.  
This half-indulgence of an exile serves  
But to provoke—a pardon should be full,  
Or it is none.

*Sar.* And who persuaded me  
After I had repealed them, or at least  
Only dismissed them from our presence, who  
Urged me to send them to their satrapies ?

*Sal.* True ; that I had forgotten ; that is, Sire, 510  
If they e'er reached their Satrapies—why, then,  
Reprove me more for my advice.

*Sar.* And if  
They do not reach them—look to it !—in safety,  
In safety, mark me—and security—  
Look to thine own.

*Sal.* Permit me to depart ;  
Their *safety* shall be cared for.

*Sar.* Get thee hence, then ;  
And, prithee, think more gently of thy brother.

*Sal.* Sire, I shall ever duly serve my sovereign.

[*Exit SALEMENES.*]

*Sar. (solus).* That man is of a temper too severe ;  
Hard but as lofty as the rock, and free 520  
From all the taints of common earth—while I  
Am softer clay, impregnated with flowers :  
But as our mould is, must the produce be.  
If I have erred this time, 'tis on the side

Where Error sits most lightly on that sense,  
 I know not what to call it; but it reckons  
 With me oftentimes for pain, and sometimes pleasure;  
 A spirit which seems placed about my heart  
 To count its throbs, not quicken them, and ask  
 Questions which mortal never dared to ask me, 530  
 Nor Baal, though an oracular deity—  
 Albeit his marble face majestic  
 Frowns as the shadows of the evening dim  
 His brows to changed expression, till at times  
 I think the statue looks in act to speak.  
 Away with these vain thoughts, I will be joyous—  
 And here comes Joy's true herald.

*Enter MYRRHA.*

*Myr.* King! the sky  
 Is overcast, and musters muttering thunder,  
 In clouds that seem approaching fast, and show  
 In forkéd flashes a commanding tempest.<sup>ii</sup> 540  
 Will you then quit the palace?

*Sar.* Tempest, say'st thou?

*Myr.* Aye, my good lord.

*Sar.* For my own part, I should be  
 Not ill content to vary the smooth scene,  
 And watch the warring elements; but this  
 Would little suit the silken garments and  
 Smooth faces of our festive friends. Say, Myrrha,  
 Art thou of those who dread the roar of clouds?

*Myr.* In my own country we respect their voices  
 As auguries of Jove.<sup>iii</sup>

*Sar.* Jove!—aye, your Baal—  
 Ours also has a property in thunder, 550  
 And ever and anon some falling bolt  
 Proves his divinity,—and yet sometimes

i. *Nor silent Baal, our imaged deity,  
 Although his marble face looks frowningly,  
 As the dusk shadows of the evening cast  
 His brow in coming dimness and at times.*—[MS. M. erased.]

ii. *In distant flashes {a wide-spread  
 the approaching} tempest.*—[MS. M. erased.]

iii. *As from the Gods to augur.*—[MS. M. erased.]

Strikes his own altars.

*Myr.* That were a dread omen.

*Sar.* Yes—for the priests. Well, we will not go forth  
Beyond the palace walls to-night, but make  
Our feast within.

*Myr.* Now, Jove be praised ! that he  
Hath heard the prayer thou wouldst not hear. The Gods  
Are kinder to thee than thou to thyself,  
And flash this storm between thee and thy foes,  
To shield thee from them.

*Sar.* Child, if there be peril, 560  
Methinks it is the same within these walls  
As on the river's brink.

*Myr.* Not so ; these walls  
Are high and strong, and guarded. Treason has  
To penetrate through many a winding way,  
And massy portal ; but in the pavilion  
There is no bulwark.

*Sar.* No, nor in the palace,  
Nor in the fortress, nor upon the top  
Of cloud-fenced Caucasus, where the eagle sits  
Nested in pathless clefts, if treachery be :  
Even as the arrow finds the airy king, 570  
The steel will reach the earthly. But be calm ;  
The men, or innocent or guilty, are  
Banished, and far upon their way.

*Myr.* They live, then ?

*Sar.* So sanguinary ? *Thou !*

*Myr.* I would not shrink  
From just infliction of due punishment  
On those who seek your life : were't otherwise,  
I should not merit mine. Besides, you heard  
The princely Salemenes.

*Sar.* This is strange ;  
The gentle and the austere are both against me,  
And urge me to revenge.

*Myr.* 'Tis a Greek virtue. 580

*Sar.* But not a kingly one—I'll none on't ; or  
If ever I indulge in't, it shall be  
With kings—my equals.

*Myr.* These men sought to be so.

*Sar.* Myrrha, this is too feminine, and springs  
From fear——

*Myr.* For you.

*Sar.* No matter, still 'tis fear.  
I have observed your sex, once roused to wrath,  
Are timidly vindictive to a pitch  
Of perseverance, which I would not copy.  
I thought you were exempt from this, as from  
The childish helplessness of Asian women.<sup>i</sup>

590

*Myr.* My Lord, I am no boaster of my love,  
Nor of my attributes; I have shared your splendour,  
And will partake your fortunes. You may live  
To find one slave more true than subject myriads:  
But this the Gods avert! I am content  
To be beloved on trust for what I feel,  
Rather than prove it to you in your griefs,<sup>ii</sup>  
Which might not yield to any cares of mine.

*Sar.* Grief cannot come where perfect love exists,  
Except to heighten it, and vanish from 600  
That which it could not scare away. Let's in—  
The hour approaches, and we must prepare  
To meet the invited guests who grace our feast.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of the Palace illuminated—SARDANAPALUS and his Guests at Table.—A storm without, and Thunder occasionally heard during the Banquet.*

*Sar.* Fill full! why this is as it should be: here  
Is my true realm, amidst bright eyes and faces  
Happy as fair! Here sorrow cannot reach.

*Zam.* Nor elsewhere—where the King is, pleasure  
sparkles.

*Sar.* Is not this better now than Nimrod's huntings,  
Or my wild Grandam's chase in search of kingdoms  
She could not keep when conquered?

i. *The weaker merit of our Asian women.*—[MS. M. erased.]

ii. *Rather than prove that love to you in griefs.*—[MS. M. erased.]

*Alt.* Mighty though  
They were, as all thy royal line have been,  
Yet none of those who went before have reached  
The acmé of Sardanapalus, who 10  
Has placed his joy in peace—the sole true glory.

*Sar.* And pleasure, good Altada, to which glory  
Is but the path. What is it that we seek?  
Enjoyment! We have cut the way short to it,  
And not gone tracking it through human ashes,  
Making a grave with every footstep.

*Zam.* No;  
All hearts are happy, and all voices bless  
The King of peace—who holds a world in jubilee.

*Sar.* Art sure of that? I have heard otherwise;  
Some say that there be traitors.

*Zam.* Traitors they 20  
Who dare to say so!—'Tis impossible.  
What cause?

*Sar.* What cause? true,—fill the goblet up;  
We will not think of them: there are none such,  
Or if there be, they are gone.

*Alt.* Guests, to my pledge!  
Down on your knees, and drink a measure to  
The safety of the King—the monarch, say I?  
The God Sardanapalus!

[*ZAMES and the Guests kneel, and exclaim—*  
Mightier than  
His father Baal, the God Sardanapalus!

[*It thunders as they kneel; some start up in confusion.*

*Zam.* Why do you rise, my friends? in that strong  
peal  
His father gods consented.

*Myr.* Menaced, rather. 30  
King, wilt thou bear this mad impiety?

*Sar.* Impiety!—nay, if the sires who reigned  
Before me can be Gods, I'll not disgrace  
Their lineage. But arise, my pious friends;  
Hoard your devotion for the Thunderer there:  
I seek but to be loved, not worshipped.

*Alt.* Both—  
Both you must ever be by all true subjects.



*Sar.* Methinks the thunders still increase : it is  
An awful night.

*Myr.* Oh yes, for those who have  
No palace to protect their worshippers. 40

*Sar.* That 's true, my Myrrha ; and could I convert  
My realm to one wide shelter for the wretched,  
I'd do it.

*Myr.* Thou'rt no God, then—not to be  
Able to work a will so good and general,  
As thy wish would imply.

*Sar.* And your Gods, then,  
Who can, and do not ?

*Myr.* Do not speak of that,  
Lest we provoke them.

*Sar.* 'True—, they love not censure  
Better than mortals. Friends, a thought has struck  
me :

Were there no temples, would there, think ye, be  
Air worshippers ?<sup>i</sup> that is, when it is angry, 50  
And pelting as even now.

*Myr.* The Persian prays  
Upon his mountain.

*Sar.* Yes, when the Sun shines.

*Myr.* And I would ask if this your palace were  
Unroofed and desolate, how many flatterers  
Would lick the dust in which the King lay low ?

*Alt.* The fair Ionian is too sarcastic  
Upon a nation whom she knows not well ;  
The Assyrians know no pleasure but their King's,  
And homage is their pride.

*Sar.* Nay, pardon, guests,  
The fair Greek's readiness of speech.

*Alt.* Pardon ! sire :  
We honour her of all things next to thee. 61  
Hark ! what was that ?

*Zam.* That ! nothing but the jar  
Of distant portals shaken by the wind.

*Alt.* It sounded like the clash of—hark again !

*Zam.* The big rain pattering on the roof.

*Sar.* No more.

i. *Worshippers in the air.*—[MS. M. erased.]

Myrrha, my love, hast thou thy shell in order ?  
Sing me a song of Sappho ;<sup>1</sup> her, thou know'st,  
Who in thy country threw——

*Enter PANIA, with his sword and garments bloody, and disordered. The guests rise in confusion.*

*Pan. (to the Guards).* Look to the portals ;  
And with your best speed to the walls without.  
Your arms ! To arms ! The King's in danger. Monarch  
Excuse this haste,—'tis faith.

*Sar.* Speak on.

*Pan.* It is 71  
As Salemenes feared ; the faithless Satraps——

*Sar.* You are wounded—give some wine. Take breath,  
good Pania.

*Pan.* 'Tis nothing—a mere flesh wound. I am worn  
More with my speed to warn my sovereign,  
Than hurt in his defence.

*Myr.* Well, Sir, the rebels ?

*Pan.* Soon as Arbaces and Beleses reached  
Their stations in the city, they refused  
To march ; and on my attempt to use the power  
Which I was delegated with, they called 80  
Upon their troops, who rose in fierce defiance.

*Myr.* All ?

*Pan.* Too many.

*Sar.* Spare not of thy free speech,  
To spare mine ears—the truth.

*Pan.* My own slight guard  
Were faithful, and what's left of it is still so.

*Myr.* And are these all the force still faithful ?

*Pan.* No—  
The Bactrians, now led on by Salemenes,  
Who even then was on his way, still urged  
By strong suspicion of the Median chiefs,  
Are numerous, and make strong head against  
The rebels, fighting inch by inch, and forming 90

1. [Perhaps Grillparzer's *Sappho* was responsible for the anachronism.  
See "Extracts from a Diary," January 12, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 171,  
note 1.]

An orb around the palace, where they mean  
To centre all their force, and save the King.  
(*He hesitates.*) I am charged to——

*Myr.* 'Tis no time for hesitation.

*Pan.* Prince Salemenes doth implore the King  
To arm himself, although but for a moment,  
And show himself unto the soldiers : his  
Sole presence in this instant might do more  
Than hosts can do in his behalf.

*Sar.* What, ho !

My armour there.

*Myr.* And wilt thou ?

*Sar.* Will I not ?

Ho, there !—but seek not for the buckler : 'tis 100  
Too heavy :—a light cuirass and my sword.  
Where are the rebels ?

*Pan.* Scarce a furlong's length  
From the outward wall the fiercest conflict rages.

*Sar.* Then I may charge on horseback. Sfero, ho !  
Order my horse out.—There is space enough  
Even in our courts, and by the outer gate,  
To marshal half the horsemen of Arabia.

[*Exit SFERO for the armour.*]

*Myr.* How I do love thee !

*Sar.* I ne'er doubted it.

*Myr.* But now I know thee.

*Sar.* (*to his Attendant*). Bring down my spear too—  
Where's Salemenes ?

*Pan.* Where a soldier should be, 110  
In the thick of the fight.

*Sar.* Then hasten to him——Is  
The path still open, and communication  
Left 'twixt the palace and the phalanx ?

*Pan.* 'Twas  
When I late left him, and I have no fear ;  
Our troops were steady, and the phalanx formed.

*Sar.* Tell him to spare his person for the present,  
And that I will not spare my own—and say,  
I come.

*Pan.* There's victory in the very word. [*Exit PANIA.*]

*Sar.* Altada—Zames—forth, and arm ye ! There

Is all in readiness in the armoury.  
See that the women are bestowed in safety  
In the remote apartments : let a guard  
Be set before them, with strict charge to quit  
The post but with their lives—command it, Zames.  
Altada, arm yourself, and return here ;  
Your post is near our person.  
[*Exeunt ZAMES, ALTADA, and all save MYRRHA.*

*Enter SFERO and others with the King's Arms, etc.*

*Sfe.* King ! your armour.  
*Sar.* (*arming himself*). Give me the cuirass—so : my  
baldric ; now

My sword : I had forgot the helm—where is it ?  
That 's well—no, 'tis too heavy ; you mistake, too—  
It was not this I meant, but that which bears  
A diadem around it. 130

*Sfe.* Sire, I deemed  
That too conspicuous from the precious stones  
To risk your sacred brow beneath—and trust me,  
This is of better metal, though less rich.  
*Sar.* You deemed ! Are you too turned a rebel ?  
Fellow !

Your part is to obey : return, and—no—  
It is too late—I will go forth without it.

*Sfe.* At least, wear this.

*Sar.* Wear Caucasus ! why, 'tis  
A mountain on my temples.

*Sfe.* Sire, the meanest  
Soldier goes not forth thus exposed to battle. 140  
All men will recognise you—for the storm  
Has ceased, and the moon breaks forth in her brightness.

*Sar.* I go forth to be recognised, and thus  
Shall be so sooner. Now—my spear ! I'm armed.

[*In going stops short, and turns to SFERO.*  
Sfero—I had forgotten—bring the mirror.<sup>1</sup>

1. ["In the third act, when Sardanapalus calls for a *mirror* to look at himself in his *armour*, recollect to quote the Latin passage from *Juvenal* upon Otho (a similar character, who did the same thing : Gifford will help you to it). The trait is, perhaps, too familiar, but it

*Sfe.* The mirror, Sire?

*Sar.* Yes, sir, of polished brass,  
Brought from the spoils of India—but be speedy.  
[*Exit Sfero.*]

*Sar.* Myrrha, retire unto a place of safety.  
Why went you not forth with the other damsels?

*Myr.* Because my place is here.

*Sar.* And when I am gone——

*Myr.* I follow.

*Sar.* You! to battle?

*Myr.* If it were so, 151  
'Twere not the first Greek girl had trod the path.  
I will await here your *return*.

*Sar.* The place  
Is spacious, and the first to be sought out,  
If they prevail; and, if it be so,  
And I return not——

*Myr.* Still we meet again.

*Sar.* How?

*Myr.* In the spot where all must meet at last—  
In Hades! if there be, as I believe,  
A shore beyond the Styx; and if there be not,  
In ashes.

*Sar.* Darest thou so much?

*Myr.* I dare all things 160  
Except survive what I have loved, to be  
A rebel's booty: forth, and do your bravest.

is historical (of Otho, at least), and natural in an effeminate character."—Letter to Murray, May 30, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 301. The quotation was not made in the first edition, 1821, nor in any subsequent issue, till 1832. It is from Juvenal, *Sat.* ii. lines 199-203—

"Ille tenet speculum, pathici gestamen Othonis,  
Actoris Aurunci spoliū, quo se ille videbat  
Armatus, cum jam tolli vexilla juberet.  
Res memoranda novis annalibus, atque recenti  
Historia, speculum civilis sarcina belli."

"This grasps a mirror—pathic Otho's boast  
(Auruncan Actor's spoil), where, while his host,  
With shouts, the signal of the fight required,  
He viewed his mailed form; viewed, and admired!  
Lo, a new subject for the historic page,  
A MIRROR, midst the arms of civil rage!"

Gifford.]

*Re-enter SFERO with the mirror.*

*Sar. (looking at himself).* This cuirass fits me well, the baldric better,  
And the helm not at all. Methinks I seem  
[*Flings away the helmet after trying it again.*  
Passing well in these toys ; and now to prove them.  
Altada ! Where 's Altada ?

*Sfe.* Waiting, Sire,  
Without : he has your shield in readiness.

*Sar.* True—I forgot—he is my shield-bearer  
By right of blood, derived from age to age.  
Myrrha, embrace me ;—yet once more—once more—  
Love me, whate'er betide. My chiefest glory 171  
Shall be to make me worthier of your love.

*Myr.* Go forth, and conquer !

[*Exeunt SARDANAPALUS and SFERO.*

Now, I am alone :

All are gone forth, and of that all how few  
Perhaps return ! Let him but vanquish, and  
Me perish ! If he vanquish not, I perish ;  
For I will not outlive him. He has wound  
About my heart, I know not how nor why.  
Not for that he is King ; for now his kingdom  
Rocks underneath his throne, and the earth yawns 180  
To yield him no more of it than a grave ;  
And yet I love him more. Oh, mighty Jove !  
Forgive this monstrous love for a barbarian,  
Who knows not of Olympus ! yes, I love him  
Now—now—far more than——Hark—to the war shout !  
Methinks it nears me. If it should be so,

[*She draws forth a small vial.*

This cunning Colchian poison, which my father  
Learned to compound on Euxine shores, and taught me  
How to preserve, shall free me ! It had freed me  
Long ere this hour, but that I loved, until 190  
I half forgot I was a slave :—where all  
Are slaves save One, and proud of servitude,  
So they are served in turn by something lower  
In the degree of bondage : we forget  
That shackles worn like ornaments no less

Are chains. Again that shout ! and now the clash  
Of arms—and now—and now——

*Enter ALTADA.*

*Alt.* Ho, Sfero, ho !

*Myr.* He is not here ; what wouldst thou with him ?

How

Goes on the conflict ?

*Alt.* Dubiously and fiercely.

*Myr.* And the King ?

*Alt.* Like a king. I must find Sfero  
And bring him a new spear with his own helmet.<sup>i</sup> 20  
He fights till now bare-headed, and by far  
Too much exposed. The soldiers knew his face,  
And the foe too ; and in the moon's broad light,  
His silk tiara and his flowing hair  
Make him a mark too royal. Every arrow  
Is pointed at the fair hair and fair features,  
And the broad fillet which crowns both.

*Myr.* Ye Gods,  
Who fulminate o'er my father's land, protect him !  
Were you sent by the King ?

*Alt.* By Salemenes, 21  
Who sent me privily upon this charge,  
Without the knowledge of the careless sovereign.  
The King ! the King fights as he revels ! ho !  
What, Sfero ! I will seek the armoury—  
He must be there. [*Exit ALTADA*]

*Myr.* 'Tis no dishonour—no—  
'Tis no dishonour to have loved this man.  
I almost wish now, what I never wished  
Before—that he were Grecian. If Alcides  
Were shamed in wearing Lydian Omphale's  
She-garb, and wielding her vile distaff ; surely 22  
He, who springs up a Hercules at once,  
Nursed in effeminate arts from youth to manhood,  
And rushes from the banquet to the battle,  
As though it were a bed of love, deserves

i. — and his own helmet.—[MS. M. erased.]

That a Greek girl should be his paramour,  
And a Greek bard his minstrel—a Greek tomb  
His monument. How goes the strife, sir?

*Enter an Officer.*

*Officer.* Lost,  
Lost almost past recovery. Zames! Where  
Is Zames?

*Myr.* Posted with the guard appointed  
To watch before the apartment of the women. 230  
[*Exit Officer.*

*Myr. (sola).* He's gone; and told no more than that  
all's lost!

What need have I to know more? In those words,  
Those little words, a kingdom and a king,  
A line of thirteen ages, and the lives  
Of thousands, and the fortune of all left  
With life, are merged; and I, too, with the great,  
Like a small bubble breaking with the wave  
Which bore it, shall be nothing. At the least,  
My fate is in my keeping: no proud victor  
Shall count me with his spoils.

*Enter PANIA.*

*Pan.* Away with me, 240  
Myrrha, without delay; we must not lose  
A moment—all that's left us now.

*Myr.* The King?

*Pan.* Sent me here to conduct you hence, beyond  
The river, by a secret passage.

*Myr.* Then  
He lives——

*Pan.* And charged me to secure your life,  
And beg you to live on for his sake, till  
He can rejoin you.

*Myr.* Will he then give way?

*Pan.* Not till the last. Still, still he does whate'er  
Despair can do; and step by step disputes  
The very palace.

*Myr.* They are here, then:—aye, 250



Their shouts come ringing through the ancient halls,  
Never profaned by rebel echoes till  
This fatal night. Farewell, Assyria's line :  
Farewell to all of Nimrod ! Even the name  
Is now no more.

*Pan.* Away with me—away !

*Myr.* No : I'll die here !—Away, and tell your King  
I loved him to the last.

*Enter SARDANAPALUS and SALEMENES with Soldiers.*

*PANIA quits MYRRHA, and ranges himself with them.*

*Sar.* Since it is thus,  
We'll die where we were born—in our own halls.<sup>i</sup>  
Serry your ranks—stand firm. I have despatched  
A trusty satrap for the guard of Zames, 260  
All fresh and faithful ; they'll be here anon.  
All is not over.—Pania, look to Myrrha.

[*PANIA returns towards MYRRHA.*

*Sal.* We have breathing time ; yet once more charge,  
my friends—  
One for Assyria !

*Sar.* Rather say for Bactria !  
My faithful Bactrians, I will henceforth be  
King of your nation, and we'll hold together  
This realm as province.

*Sal.* Hark ! they come—they come.

*Enter BELESES and ARBACES with the Rebels.*

*Arb.* Set on, we have them in the toil. Charge !  
charge !

*Bel.* On ! on !—Heaven fights for us, and with us—On !

[*They charge the King and SALEMENES with their  
troops, who defend themselves till the arrival of  
ZAMES with the Guard before mentioned. The  
Rebels are then driven off, and pursued by  
SALEMENES, etc. As the King is going to join  
the pursuit, BELESES crosses him.*

*Bel.* Ho ! tyrant—I will end this war.

i. *We'll die where we were raised* —.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

*Sar.*

Even so, 270

My warlike priest, and precious prophet, and  
Grateful and trusty subject: yield, I pray thee.  
I would reserve thee for a fitter doom,  
Rather than dip my hands in holy blood.

*Bel.* Thine hour is come.

*Sar.*

No, thine.—I've lately read,  
Though but a young astrologer, the stars;  
And ranging round the zodiac, found thy fate  
In the sign of the Scorpion, which proclaims  
That thou wilt now be crushed.

*Bel.*

But not by thee.

[*They fight; BELESES is wounded and disarmed.*

*Sar.* (*raising his sword to despatch him, exclaims*)—  
Now call upon thy planets, will they shoot 280  
From the sky to preserve their seer and credit?

[*A party of Rebels enter and rescue BELESES. They  
assail the King, who in turn, is rescued by a Party  
of his Soldiers, who drive the Rebels off.*

The villain was a prophet after all.

Upon them—ho! there—victory is ours.

[*Exit in pursuit.*

*Myr.* (*to Pan.*). Pursue! Why stand'st thou here, and  
leavest the ranks

Of fellow-soldiers conquering without thee?

*Pan.* The King's command was not to quit thee.

*Myr.*

*Me!*

Think not of me—a single soldier's arm

Must not be wanting now. I ask no guard,

I need no guard: what, with a world at stake,

Keep watch upon a woman? Hence, I say,

Or thou art shamed! Nay, then, I will go forth, 290

A feeble female, 'midst their desperate strife,

And bid thee guard me *there*—where thou shouldst shield

Thy sovereign.

[*Exit MYRRHA.*

*Pan.*

Yet stay, damsel!—She's gone.

If aught of ill betide her, better I

Had lost my life. Sardanapalus holds her

Far dearer than his kingdom, yet he fights

For that too; and can I do less than he,

Who never flashed a scimitar till now?

Myrrha, return, and I obey you, though  
In disobedience to the monarch.

300  
[Exit PANIA.]

*Enter ALTADA and SFERO by an opposite door.*

*Alt.*

Myrrha!

What, gone? yet she was here when the fight raged,  
And Pania also. Can aught have befallen them?

*Sfe.* I saw both safe, when late the rebels fled;  
They probably are but retired to make  
Their way back to the harem.

*Alt.*

If the King

Prove victor, as it seems even now he must,  
And miss his own Ionian, we are doomed  
To worse than captive rebels.

*Sfe.*

Let us trace them:

She cannot be fled far; and, found, she makes 310  
A richer prize to our soft sovereign  
Than his recovered kingdom.

*Alt.*

Baal himself

Ne'er fought more fiercely to win empire, than  
His silken son to save it: he defies  
All augury of foes or friends; and like  
The close and sultry summer's day, which bodes  
A twilight tempest, bursts forth in such thunder  
As sweeps the air and deluges the earth.  
The man's inscrutable.

*Sfe.*

Not more than others.

All are the sons of circumstance: away— 320  
Let's seek the slave out, or prepare to be  
Tortured for his infatuation, and<sup>1</sup>  
Condemned without a crime.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter SALEMENES and Soldiers, etc.*

*Sal.*

The triumph is

Flattering: they are beaten backward from the palace,  
And we have opened regular access  
To the troops stationed on the other side  
Euphrates, who may still be true; nay, must be,

i. Tortured because his mind is tortured.—[MS. M. erased.]

When they hear of our victory. But where  
Is the chief victor? where's the King?

*Enter SARDANAPALUS, cum suis, etc., and MYRRHA.*

*Sar.* Here, brother.

*Sal.* Unhurt, I hope.

*Sar.* Not quite; but let it pass. 330  
We've cleared the palace——

*Sal.* And I trust the city.  
Our numbers gather; and I've ordered onward  
A cloud of Parthians, hitherto reserved,  
All fresh and fiery, to be poured upon them  
In their retreat, which soon will be a flight.

*Sar.* It is already, or at least they marched  
Faster than I could follow with my Bactrians,  
Who spared no speed. I am spent: give me a seat.

*Sal.* There stands the throne, Sire.

*Sar.* 'Tis no place to rest on,  
For mind nor body: let me have a couch, 340  
[*They place a seat.*

A peasant's stool, I care not what: so—now  
I breathe more freely.

*Sal.* This great hour has proved  
The brightest and most glorious of your life.

*Sar.* And the most tiresome. Where's my cupbearer?  
Bring me some water.

*Sal.* (*smiling*). 'Tis the first time he  
Ever had such an order: even I,<sup>i</sup>  
Your most austere of counsellors, would now  
Suggest a purpler beverage.

*Sar.* Blood—doubtless.  
But there's enough of that shed; as for wine,  
I have learned to-night the price of the pure element:  
Thrice have I drank of it, and thrice renewed, 351  
With greater strength than the grape ever gave me,  
My charge upon the rebels. Where's the soldier  
Who gave me water in his helmet?<sup>1</sup>

i. *He ever such an order* —.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

*He ever had that order* —.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. [*"When 'the king was almost dying with thirst' . . . the eunuch*

*One of the Guards.* Slain, Sire !  
 An arrow pierced his brain, while, scattering<sup>1</sup>  
 The last drops from his helm, he stood in act  
 To place it on his brows.

*Sar.* Slain ! unrewarded !  
 And slain to serve my thirst : that's hard, poor slave !  
 Had he but lived, I would have gorged him with  
 Gold : all the gold of earth could ne'er repay 360  
 The pleasure of that draught ; for I was parched  
 As I am now. [*They bring water—he drinks.*]

I live again—from henceforth  
 The goblet I reserve for hours of love,  
 But war on water.

*Sal.* And that bandage, Sire,  
 Which girds your arm ?

*Sar.* A scratch from brave Beleses.

*Myr.* Oh ! he is wounded !"

*Sar.* Not too much of that ;  
 And yet it feels a little stiff and painful,  
 Now I am cooler.

*Myr.* You have bound it with——

*Sar.* The fillet of my diadem : the first time  
 That ornament was ever aught to me, 370

- i. — *ere they had time*  
*To place his helm again.*—[*M.S. M. erased.*]  
 ii. *O ye Gods ! wounded.*—[*M.S. M.*]

Satibarzanes sought every place for water. . . . After much search he found one of those poor Caunians had about two quarts of bad water in a mean bottle, and he took it and carried it to the king. After the king had drawn it all up, the eunuch asked him, 'If he did not find it a disagreeable beverage?' Upon which he swore by all the gods, 'That he had never drunk the most delicious wine, nor the lightest and clearest water with so much pleasure. I wish only,' continued he, 'that I could find the man who gave it thee, that I might make him a recompense. In the mean time I entreat the gods to make him happy and rich.'—Plutarch's *Artaxerxes*, Langhorne's translation, 1838, p. 694. Poetry as well as history repeats itself. Compare the "water green" which Gunga Din brought, at the risk of his own life, to fill the wounded soldier's helmet (*Barrack-Room Ballads*, by Rudyard Kipling, 1892, p. 25). Compare, too—

"*Arm.* 'Tis a scratch. . . .  
 In the shoulder, not the sword arm—  
 And that's enough. I am thirsty : would I had  
 A helm of water !"

*The Deformed Transformed*, part ii. sc. ii. 44, *seq.*, *vide post*, p. 518.]

Save an incumbrance.

*Myr. (to the Attendants).* Summon speedily  
A leech of the most skilful : pray, retire :  
I will unbind your wound and tend it.

*Sar.* Do so,  
For now it throbs sufficiently : but what  
Know'st thou of wounds ? yet wherefore do I ask ?  
Know'st thou, my brother, where I lighted on  
This minion ?

*Sal.* Herding with the other females,  
Like frightened antelopes.

*Sar.* No : like the dam  
Of the young lion, femininely raging  
(And femininely meaneth furiously, 380  
Because all passions in excess are female,)  
Against the hunter flying with her cub,  
She urged on with her voice and gesture, and  
Her floating hair and flashing eyes,<sup>1</sup> the soldiers,  
In the pursuit.

*Sal.* Indeed !

*Sar.* You see, this night  
Made warriors of more than me. I paused  
To look upon her, and her kindled cheek ;  
Her large black eyes, that flashed through her long hair  
As it streamed o'er her ; her blue veins that rose  
Along her most transparent brow ; her nostril 390  
Dilated from its symmetry ; her lips  
Apart ; her voice that clove through all the din,  
As a lute pierceth through the cymbal's clash,  
Jarred but not drowned by the loud brattling ; her  
Waved arms, more dazzling with their own born whiteness  
Than the steel her hand held, which she caught up  
From a dead soldier's grasp ;—all these things made  
Her seem unto the troops a prophetess  
Of victory, or Victory herself,  
Come down to hail us hers.<sup>2</sup>

1. [Compare—

“ His flashing eyes, his floating hair.”

*Kubla Khan*, line 49.]

2. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto I. stanzas lv., lvi., *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 57, 58, and note 11, pp. 91, 92.]

*Sal.* (*aside*). This is too much. 400  
Again the love-fit 's on him, and all 's lost,  
Unless we turn his thoughts. (*Aloud.*) But pray thee, Sire,  
Think of your wound—you said even now 'twas painful.

*Sar.* That 's true, too ; but I must not think of it.

*Sal.* I have looked to all things needful, and will now  
Receive reports of progress made in such  
Orders as I had given, and then return  
To hear your further pleasure.

*Sar.* Be it so.

*Sal.* (*in retiring*). Myrrha !

*Myr.* Prince !

*Sal.* You have shown a soul to-night,  
Which, were he not my sister's lord—— But now 410  
I have no time : thou lovest the King ?

*Myr.* I love  
Sardanapalus.

*Sal.* But wouldst have him King still ?

*Myr.* I would not have him less than what he should  
be.

*Sal.* Well then, to have him King, and yours, and all  
He should, or should not be ; to have him *live*,  
Let him not sink back into luxury.

You have more power upon his spirit than  
Wisdom within these walls, or fierce rebellion  
Raging without : look well that he relapse not.

*Myr.* There needed not the voice of Salemenes 420  
To urge me on to this : I will not fail.  
All that a woman's weakness can——

*Sal.* Is power  
Omnipotent o'er such a heart as his :  
Exert it wisely. [*Exit SALEMENES.*]

*Sar.* Myrrha ! what, at whispers  
With my stern brother ? I shall soon be jealous.

*Myr.* (*smiling*). You have cause, Sire ; for on the earth  
there breathes not

A man more worthy of a woman's love,  
A soldier's trust, a subject's reverence,  
A king's esteem—the whole world's admiration !

*Sar.* Praise him, but not so warmly. I must not 430  
Hear those sweet lips grow eloquent in aught

That throws me into shade ; yet you speak truth.

*Myr.* And now retire, to have your wound looked to,  
Pray lean on me.

*Sar.* Yes, love ! but not from pain.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—SARDANAPALUS *discovered sleeping upon a Couch, and occasionally disturbed in his slumbers, with MYRRHA watching.*

*Myr. (sola, gazing).* I have stolen upon his rest, if rest  
it be,

Which thus convulses slumber : shall I wake him ?  
No, he seems calmer. Oh, thou God of Quiet !  
Whose reign is o'er sealed eyelids and soft dreams,  
Or deep, deep sleep, so as to be unfathomed,  
Look like thy brother, Death,<sup>1</sup>—so still, so stirless—  
For then we are happiest, as it may be, we  
Are happiest of all within the realm  
Of thy stern, silent, and unwakening Twin.  
Again he moves—again the play of pain 10  
Shoots o'er his features, as the sudden gust  
Crisps the reluctant lake that lay so calm<sup>1</sup>  
Beneath the mountain shadow ; or the blast  
Ruffles the autumn leaves, that drooping cling  
Faintly and motionless to their loved boughs.  
I must awake him—yet not yet ; who knows  
From what I rouse him ? It seems pain ; but if  
I quicken him to heavier pain ? The fever  
Of this tumultuous night, the grief too of  
His wound, though slight, may cause all this, and shake  
Me more to see than him to suffer. No : 21  
Let Nature use her own maternal means,

i. *Crisps the unswelling wave.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. [Compare—

“ How wonderful is Death,  
Death and his brother Sleep ! ”

Shelley's *Queen Mab*, i. lines 1, 2.]



And I await to second, not disturb her.

*Sar. (awakening).* Not so—although he multiplied the stars,

And gave them to me as a realm to share  
From you and with you! I would not so purchase  
The empire of Eternity. Hence—hence—  
Old Hunter of the earliest brutes! and ye,<sup>1</sup>  
Who hunted fellow-creatures as if brutes!  
Once bloody mortals—and now bloodier idols, 30  
If your priests lie not! And thou, ghastly Beldame!  
Dripping with dusky gore, and trampling on  
The carcasses of Inde—away! away!

Where am I? Where the spectres? Where——No—that  
Is no false phantom: I should know it 'midst  
All that the dead dare gloomily raise up  
From their black gulf to daunt the living. Myrrha!

*Myr.* Alas! thou art pale, and on thy brow the drops  
Gather like night dew. My beloved, hush—  
Calm thee. Thy speech seems of another world, 40  
And thou art lord of this. Be of good cheer;  
All will go well.

*Sar.* Thy *hand*—so—'tis thy hand;  
'Tis flesh; grasp—clasp—yet closer, till I feel  
Myself that which I was.

*Myr.* At least know me  
For what I am, and ever must be—thine.

*Sar.* I know it now. I know this life again.  
Ah, Myrrha! I have been where we shall be.

*Myr.* My lord!

*Sar.* I've been i' the grave—where worms are lords  
And kings are——But I did not deem it so;  
I thought 'twas nothing.

*Myr.* So it is; except 50  
Unto the timid, who anticipate  
That which may never be.

*Sar.* Oh, Myrrha! if  
Sleep shows such things, what may not Death disclose?

*Myr.* I know no evil Death can show, which Life  
Has not already shown to those who live

i. *Old Hunter of mankind when baited and ye*  
*All brutal who pursued both brutes and men.*—[MS. M. erased.]

Embodied longest. If there be indeed  
A shore where Mind survives, 'twill be as Mind  
All unincorporate : or if there flits  
A shadow of this cumbrous clog of clay,  
Which stalks, methinks, between our souls and heaven,  
And fetters us to earth—at least the phantom, 61  
Whate'er it have to fear, will not fear Death.

*Sar.* I fear it not ; but I have felt—have seen—  
A legion of the dead.

*Myr.* And so have I.  
The dust we tread upon was once alive,  
And wretched. But proceed : what hast thou seen ?  
Speak it, 'twill lighten thy dimmed mind.

*Sar.* Methought——

*Myr.* Yet pause, thou art tired—in pain—exhausted ;  
all

Which can impair both strength and spirit : seek  
Rather to sleep again.

*Sar.* Not now—I would not 70  
Dream ; though I know it now to be a dream  
What I have dreamt :—and canst thou bear to hear it ?

*Myr.* I can bear all things, dreams of life or death,  
Which I participate with you in semblance  
Or full reality.

*Sar.* And this looked real,  
I tell you : after that these eyes were open,  
I saw them in their flight—for then they fled.

*Myr.* Say on.

*Sar.* I saw, that is, I dreamed myself  
Here—here—even where we are, guests as we were,  
Myself a host that deemed himself but guest, 80  
Willing to equal all in social freedom ;  
But, on my right hand and my left, instead  
Of thee and Zames, and our custom'd meeting,  
Was ranged on my left hand a haughty, dark,  
And deadly face ; I could not recognise it,  
Yet I had seen it, though I knew not where :  
The features were a Giant's, and the eye  
Was still, yet lighted ; his long locks curled down  
On his vast bust, whence a huge quiver rose  
With shaft-heads feathered from the eagle's wing, 90

That peeped up bristling through his serpent hair.<sup>1</sup>  
 I invited him to fill the cup which stood  
 Between us, but he answered not; I filled it;  
 He took it not, but stared upon me, till  
 I trembled at the fixed glare of his eye:  
 I frowned upon him as a king should frown;  
 He frowned not in his turn, but looked upon me  
 With the same aspect, which appalled me more,  
 Because it changed not; and I turned for refuge  
 To milder guests, and sought them on the right, 100  
 Where thou wert wont to be. But—— [He pauses.]

*Myr.*

What instead?

*Sar.* In thy own chair—thy own place in the banquet—  
 I sought thy sweet face in the circle—but  
 Instead—a grey-haired, withered, bloody-eyed,  
 And bloody-handed, ghastly, ghostly thing,  
 Female in garb, and crowned upon the brow,  
 Furrowed with years, yet sneering with the passion  
 Of vengeance, leering too with that of lust,  
 Sate:—my veins curdled.<sup>1</sup>

*Myr.*

Is this all?

*Sar.*

Upon

Her right hand—her lank, bird-like, right hand—stood  
 A goblet, bubbling o'er with blood; and on 111  
 Her left, another, filled with—what I saw not,  
 But turned from it and her. But all along  
 The table sate a range of crownéd wretches,  
 Of various aspects, but of one expression.

*Myr.* And felt you not this a mere vision?

*Sar.*

No:

It was so palpable, I could have touched them.  
 I turned from one face to another, in  
 The hope to find at last one which I knew  
 Ere I saw theirs: but no—all turned upon me, 120  
 And stared, but neither ate nor drank, but stared,

i. *With arrows peeping through his falling hair.*—[MS. M. erased.]

1. [In the diary for November 23, 1813 (*Letters*, 1898, ii. 334, 335), Byron alludes to a dream which "chilled his blood" and shook his nerves. Compare Coleridge's *Pains of Sleep*, lines 23–26—

"Desire with loathing strangely mixed,  
 On wild or hateful objects fixed.  
 Fantastic passions! maddening brawl!  
 And shame and terror over all!"

Till I grew stone, as they seemed half to be,  
Yet breathing stone, for I felt life in them,  
And life in me : there was a horrid kind  
Of sympathy between us, as if they  
Had lost a part of death to come to me,  
And I the half of life to sit by them.  
We were in an existence all apart  
From heaven or earth——And rather let me see  
Death all than such a being !

*Myr.*

And the end ?

130

*Sar.* At last I sate, marble, as they, when rose  
The Hunter and the Crone ; and smiling on me—  
Yes, the enlarged but noble aspect of  
The Hunter smiled upon me—I should say,  
His lips, for his eyes moved not—and the woman's  
Thin lips relaxed to something like a smile.  
Both rose, and the crowned figures on each hand  
Rose also, as if aping their chief shades—  
Mere mimics even in death—but I sate still :  
A desperate courage crept through every limb,  
And at the last I feared them not, but laughed  
Full in their phantom faces. But then—then  
The Hunter laid his hand on mine : I took it,  
And grasped it—but it melted from my own ;  
While he too vanished, and left nothing but  
The memory of a hero, for he looked so.

140

*Myr.* And was : the ancestor of heroes, too,  
And thine no less.

*Sar.* Aye, Myrrha, but the woman,  
The female who remained, she flew upon me,  
And burnt my lips up with her noisome kisses ;  
And, flinging down the goblets on each hand,  
Methought their poisons flowed around us, till  
Each formed a hideous river. Still she clung ;  
The other phantoms, like a row of statues,  
Stood dull as in our temples, but she still  
Embraced me, while I shrunk from her, as if  
In lieu of her remote descendant, I  
Had been the son who slew her for her incest.<sup>1</sup>

150

1. [For the story of Semiramis and Ninia, see *Justinus Hist.*, lib. i. cap. ii.]

Then—then—a chaos of all loathsome things  
Thronged thick and shapeless : I was dead, yet feeling—  
Buried, and raised again—consumed by worms, 161  
Purged by the flames, and withered in the air !  
I can fix nothing further of my thoughts,  
Save that I longed for thee, and sought for thee,  
In all these agonies,—and woke and found thee.

*Myr.* So shalt thou find me ever at thy side,  
Here and hereafter, if the last may be.  
But think not of these things—the mere creations  
Of late events, acting upon a frame  
Unused by toil, yet over-wrought by toil— 170  
Such as might try the sternest.

*Sar.* I am better.  
Now that I see thee once more, *what was seen*  
Seems nothing.

*Enter SALEMENES.*

*Sal.* Is the king so soon awake ?

*Sar.* Yes, brother, and I would I had not slept ;  
For all the predecessors of our line  
Rose up, methought, to drag me down to them.  
My father was amongst them, too ; but he,  
I know not why, kept from me, leaving me  
Between the hunter-founder of our race,  
And her, the homicide and husband-killer, 180  
Whom you call glorious.

*Sal.* So I term you also,  
Now you have shown a spirit like to hers.  
By day-break I propose that we set forth,  
And charge once more the rebel crew, who still  
Keep gathering head, repulsed, but not quite quelled.

*Sar.* How wears the night ?

*Sal.* There yet remain some hours  
Of darkness : use them for your further rest.

*Sar.* No, not to-night, if 'tis not gone : methought  
I passed hours in that vision.

*Myr.* Scarcely one ;  
I watched by you : it was a heavy hour, 190  
But an hour only.

*Sar.* Let us then hold council ;  
To-morrow we set forth.

*Sal.* But ere that time,  
I had a grace to seek.

*Sar.* 'Tis granted.

*Sal.* Hear it  
Ere you reply too readily ; and 'tis  
For *your* ear only.

*Myr.* Prince, I take my leave.

[*Exit MYRRHA.*]

*Sal.* That slave deserves her freedom.

*Sar.* Freedom only !  
That slave deserves to share a throne.

*Sal.* Your patience—  
'Tis not yet vacant, and 'tis of its partner  
I come to speak with you.

*Sar.* How ! of the Queen ?

*Sal.* Even so. I judged it fitting for their safety, 200  
That, ere the dawn, she sets forth with her children  
For Paphlagonia, where our kinsman Cotta <sup>1</sup>  
Governs ; and there, at all events, secure  
My nephews and your sons their lives, and with them  
Their just pretensions to the crown in case——

*Sar.* I perish—as is probable : well thought—  
Let them set forth with a sure escort.

*Sal.* That  
Is all provided, and the galley ready  
To drop down the Euphrates ; but ere they  
Depart, will you not see——

*Sar.* My sons ? It may 210  
Unman my heart, and the poor boys will weep ;  
And what can I reply to comfort them,  
Save with some hollow hopes, and ill-worn smiles ?  
You know I cannot feign.

*Sal.* But you can feel !  
At least, I trust so : in a word, the Queen  
Requests to see you ere you part—for ever.

*Sar.* Unto what end ? what purpose ? I will grant  
Aught—all that she can ask—but such a meeting.

1. [See Diod. Siculi *Bibl. Hist.*, lib. ii. 80 c. Cotta was not a kinsman, but a loyal tributary.]

*Sal.* You know, or ought to know, enough of women,  
 Since you have studied them so steadily,<sup>1</sup> 220  
 That what they ask in aught that touches on  
 The heart, is dearer to their feelings or  
 Their fancy, than the whole external world.  
 I think as you do of my sister's wish ;  
 But 'twas her wish—she is my sister—you  
 Her husband—will you grant it?

*Sar.* 'Twill be useless :  
 But let her come.

*Sal.* I go. [*Exit SALEMENES.*]

*Sar.* We have lived asunder  
 Too long to meet again—and *now* to meet !  
 Have I not cares enow, and pangs enow,  
 To bear alone, that we must mingle sorrows, 230  
 Who have ceased to mingle love ?

*Re-enter SALEMENES and ZARINA.*

*Sal.* My sister ! Courage :  
 Shame not our blood with trembling, but remember  
 From whence we sprung. The Queen is present, Sire.

*Zar.* I pray thee, brother, leave me.

*Sal.* Since you ask it.  
 [*Exit SALEMENES.*]

*Zar.* Alone with him ! How many a year has passed,<sup>1</sup>  
 Though we are still so young, since we have met,  
 Which I have worn in widowhood of heart.  
 He loved me not : yet he seems little changed—  
 Changed to me only—would the change were mutual !  
 He speaks not—scarce regards me—not a word, 240  
 Nor look—yet he *was* soft of voice and aspect,  
 Indifferent, not austere. My Lord !

i. The MS. inserts—

(*But I speak only of such as are virtuous.*)

1. [Byron must often have pictured to himself an unexpected meeting with his wife. In certain moods he would write letters to her which were never sent, or never reached her hands. The scene between Sardanapalus and Zarina reflects the sentiments contained in one such letter, dated November 17, 1821, which Moore printed in his *Life*, pp. 581, 582. See *Letters*, 1901, v. 479.]

*Sar.* Zarina !

*Zar.* No, *not* Zarina—do not say Zarina.  
That tone—That word—annihilate long years,  
And things which make them longer.

*Sar.* 'Tis too late  
To think of these past dreams. Let's not reproach—  
That is, reproach me not—for the *last* time—

*Zar.* And *first*. I ne'er reproached you.

*Sar.* 'Tis most true ;  
And that reproof comes heavier on my heart  
Than—But our hearts are not in our own power. 250

*Zar.* Nor hands ; but I gave both.

*Sar.* Your brother said  
It was your will to see me, ere you went  
From Nineveh with—(*He hesitates.*)

*Zar.* Our children : it is true.  
I wish to thank you that you have not divided  
My heart from all that 's left it now to love—  
Those who are yours and mine, who look like you,  
And look upon me as you looked upon me  
Once—but *they* have not changed.

*Sar.* Nor ever will.  
I fain would have them dutiful.

*Zar.* I cherish  
Those infants, not alone from the blind love 260  
Of a fond mother, but as a fond woman.  
They are now the only tie between us.

*Sar.* Deem not  
I have not done you justice : rather make them  
Resemble your own line than their own Sire.  
I trust them with you—to you : fit them for  
A throne, or, if that be denied—You have heard  
Of this night's tumults ?

*Zar.* I had half forgotten,  
And could have welcomed any grief save yours,  
Which gave me to behold your face again.

*Sar.* The throne—I say it not in fear—but 'tis 270  
In peril : they perhaps may never mount it ;  
But let them not for this lose sight of it.  
I will dare all things to bequeath it them ;  
But if I fail, then they must win it back



Bravely—and, won, wear it wisely, not as I<sup>1</sup>  
Have wasted down my royalty.

*Zar.* They ne'er  
Shall know from me of aught but what may honour  
Their father's memory.

*Sar.* Rather let them hear  
The truth from you than from a trampling world.  
If they be in adversity, they'll learn 280  
Too soon the scorn of crowds for crownless Princes,  
And find that all their father's sins are theirs.  
My boys!—I could have borne it were I childless.

*Zar.* Oh! do not say so—do not poison all  
My peace left, by unwishing that thou wert  
A father. If thou conquerest, they shall reign,  
And honour him who saved the realm for them,  
So little cared for as his own; and if——

*Sar.* 'Tis lost, all Earth will cry out, "thank your  
father!"  
And they will swell the echo with a curse. 290

*Zar.* That they shall never do; but rather honour  
The name of him, who, dying like a king,  
In his last hours did more for his own memory  
Than many monarchs in a length of days,  
Which date the flight of time, but make no annals.

*Sar.* Our annals draw perchance unto their close;  
But at the least, whate'er the past, their end  
Shall be like their beginning—memorable.

*Zar.* Yet, be not rash—be careful of your life,  
Live but for those who love.

*Sar.* And who are they? 300  
A slave, who loves from passion—I'll not say  
Ambition—she has seen thrones shake, and loves;  
A few friends who have revelled till we are  
As one, for they are nothing if I fall;  
A brother I have injured—children whom  
I have neglected, and a spouse——

*Zar.* Who loves.

*Sar.* And pardons?

*Zar.* I have never thought of this,  
And cannot pardon till I have condemned.

i. *Bravely and won wear wisely—not as I.*—[MS. M. *ceased.*]

*Sar.* My wife !

*Zar.* Now blessings on thee for that word !  
I never thought to hear it more—from thee. 310

*Sar.* Oh ! thou wilt hear it from my subjects. Yes—  
These slaves whom I have nurtured, pampered, fed,  
And swoln with peace, and gorged with plenty, till  
They reign themselves—all monarchs in their mansions—  
Now swarm forth in rebellion, and demand  
His death, who made their lives a jubilee ;  
While the few upon whom I have no claim  
Are faithful ! This is true, yet monstrous.

*Zar.* 'Tis  
Perhaps too natural ; for benefits  
Turn poison in bad minds.

*Sar.* And good ones make 320  
Good out of evil. Happier than the bee,  
Which hives not but from wholesome flowers.

*Zar.* Then reap  
The honey, nor inquire whence 'tis derived.  
Be satisfied—you are not all abandoned.

*Sar.* My life insures me that. How long, bethink you,  
Were not I yet a king, should I be mortal ;  
That is, where mortals *are*, not where they must be ?

*Zar.* I know not. But yet live for my—that is,  
Your children's sake !

*Sar.* My gentle, wronged Zarina !  
I am the very slave of Circumstance 330  
And Impulse—borne away with every breath !  
Misplaced upon the throne—misplaced in life.  
I know not what I could have been, but feel  
I am not what I should be—let it end.  
But take this with thee : if I was not formed  
To prize a love like thine, a mind like thine,  
Nor dote even on thy beauty—as I've doted  
On lesser charms, for no cause save that such  
Devotion was a duty, and I hated  
All that looked like a chain for me or others 340  
(This even Rebellion must avouch) ; yet hear  
These words, perhaps among my last—that none  
E'er valued more thy virtues, though he knew not  
To profit by them—as the miner lights

Upon a vein of virgin ore, discovering  
That which avails him nothing : he hath found it,  
But 'tis not his—but some superior's, who  
Placed him to dig, but not divide the wealth  
Which sparkles at his feet ; nor dare he lift  
Nor poise it, but must grovel on, upturning 350  
The sullen earth.

*Zar.* Oh ! if thou hast at length  
Discovered that my love is worth esteem,  
I ask no more—but let us hence together,  
And *I*—let me say *we*—shall yet be happy.  
Assyria is not all the earth—we'll find  
A world out of our own—and be more blessed  
Than I have ever been, or thou, with all  
An empire to indulge thee.

*Enter SALEMENES.*

*Sal.* I must part ye—  
The moments, which must not be lost, are passing.

*Zar.* Inhuman brother ! wilt thou thus weigh out 360  
Instants so high and blest ?

*Sal.* Blest !

*Zar.* He hath been  
So gentle with me, that I cannot think  
Of quitting.

*Sal.* So—this feminine farewell  
Ends as such partings end, in *no* departure.  
I thought as much, and yielded against all  
My better bodings. But it must not be.

*Zar.* Not be ?

*Sal.* Remain, and perish—

*Zar.* With my husband—

*Sal.* And children.

*Zar.* Alas !

*Sal.* Hear me, sister, like  
*My* sister :—all 's prepared to make your safety  
Certain, and of the boys too, our last hopes ; 370  
'Tis not a single question of mere feeling,  
Though that were much—but 'tis a point of state :  
The rebels would do more to seize upon

The offspring of their sovereign, and so crush——

*Zar.* Ah! do not name it.

*Sal.* Well, then, mark me: when  
They are safe beyond the Median's grasp, the rebels  
Have missed their chief aim—the extinction of  
The line of Nimrod. Though the present King  
Fall, his sons live—for victory and vengeance.

*Zar.* But could not I remain, alone?

*Sal.* What! leave 380  
Your children, with two parents and yet orphans—  
In a strange land—so young, so distant?

*Zar.* No—  
My heart will break.

*Sal.* Now you know all—decide.

*Sar.* Zarina, he hath spoken well, and we  
Must yield awhile to this necessity.  
Remaining here, you may lose all; departing,  
You save the better part of what is left,  
To both of us, and to such loyal hearts  
As yet beat in these kingdoms.

*Sal.* The time presses.

*Sar.* Go, then. If e'er we meet again, perhaps 390  
I may be worthier of you—and, if not,  
Remember that my faults, though not atoned for,  
Are ended. Yet, I dread thy nature will  
Grieve more above the blighted name and ashes  
Which once were mightiest in Assyria—than——  
But I grow womanish again, and must not;  
I must learn sternness now. My sins have all  
Been of the softer order——*hide* thy tears—  
I do not bid thee *not* to shed them—'twere  
Easier to stop Euphrates at its source 400  
Than one tear of a true and tender heart—  
But let me not behold them; they unman me  
Here when I had remanned myself. My brother,  
Lead her away.

*Zar.* Oh, God! I never shall  
Behold him more!

*Sal.* (*striving to conduct her*). Nay, sister, I *must* be  
obeyed.

*Zar.* I must remain—away! you shall not hold me.

What, shall he die alone?—*I* live alone?

*Sal.* He shall *not die alone*; but lonely you  
Have lived for years.

*Zar.* That's false! I knew *he* lived,  
And lived upon his image—let me go! 410

*Sal.* (*conducting her off the stage*). Nay, then, I must  
use some fraternal force,  
Which you will pardon.

*Zar.* Never. Help me! Oh!  
Sardanapalus, wilt thou thus behold me  
Torn from thee?

*Sal.* Nay—then all is lost again,  
If that this moment is not gained.

*Zar.* My brain turns—  
My eyes fail—where is he? [*She faints.*]

*Sar.* (*advancing*). No—set her down;  
She's dead—and you have slain her.

*Sal.* 'Tis the mere  
Faintness of o'erwrought passion: in the air  
She will recover. Pray, keep back—[*Aside.*] I must  
Avail myself of this sole moment to 420  
Bear her to where her children are embarked,  
I' the royal galley on the river.

[*SALEMENES bears her off.*]

*Sar.* (*solus*). This, too—  
And this too must I suffer—I, who never  
Inflicted purposely on human hearts  
A voluntary pang! But that is false—  
She loved me, and I loved her.—Fatal passion!  
Why dost thou not expire at *once* in hearts  
Which thou hast lighted up at once? Zarina!<sup>i</sup>  
I must pay dearly for the desolation  
Now brought upon thee. Had I never loved 430  
But thee, I should have been an unopposed  
Monarch of honouring nations. To what gulfs  
A single deviation from the track  
Of human duties leads even those who claim  
The homage of mankind as their born due,  
And find it, till they forfeit it themselves!

i. *Which thou hast lighted up at once? but leavest  
One to grieve o'er the other's change—Zarina.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

*Enter MYRRHA.*

*Sar.* You here! Who called you?

*Myr.* No one—but I heard  
Far off a voice of wail and lamentation,  
And thought——

*Sar.* It forms no portion of your duties  
To enter here till sought for.

*Myr.* Though I might, 440  
Perhaps, recall some softer words of yours  
(Although they *too were chiding*), which reproved me,  
Because I ever dreaded to intrude;  
Resisting my own wish and your injunction  
To heed no time nor presence, but approach you  
Uncalled for :—I retire.

*Sar.* Yet stay—being here.  
I pray you pardon me : events have soured me  
Till I wax peevish—heed it not : I shall  
Soon be myself again.

*Myr.* I wait with patience,  
What I shall see with pleasure.

*Sar.* Scarce a moment 450  
Before your entrance in this hall, Zarina,  
Queen of Assyria, departed hence.

*Myr.* Ah!

*Sar.* Wherefore do you start?

*Myr.* Did I do so?

*Sar.* 'Twas well you entered by another portal,  
Else you had met. That pang at least is spared her!

*Myr.* I know to feel for her.

*Sar.* That is too much,  
And beyond nature—'tis nor mutual<sup>i</sup>  
Nor possible. You cannot pity her,  
Nor she aught but——

*Myr.* Despise the favourite slave?  
Not more than I have ever scorned myself. 460

*Sar.* Scorned! what, to be the envy of your sex,  
And lord it o'er the heart of the World's lord?

*Myr.* Were you the lord of twice ten thousand worlds—  
As you are like to lose the one you sway—

i. — *natural.*—[*MS. M.* The first edition reads "mutual."]

I did abase myself as much in being  
Your paramour, as though you were a peasant—  
Nay, more, if that the peasant were a Greek.

*Sar.* You talk it well——

*Myr.*

And truly.

*Sar.*

In the hour

Of man's adversity all things grow daring  
Against the falling ; but as I am not 470  
Quite fall'n, nor now disposed to bear reproaches,  
Perhaps because I merit them too often,  
Let us then part while peace is still between us.

*Myr.* Part !

*Sar.* Have not all past human beings parted,  
And must not all the present one day part ?

*Myr.* Why ?

*Sar.* For your safety, which I will have looked to,  
With a strong escort to your native land ;  
And such gifts, as, if you had not been all  
A Queen, shall make your dowry worth a kingdom.

*Myr.* I pray you talk not thus.

*Sar.*

The Queen is gone :

You need not shame to follow. I would fall 481  
Alone—I seek no partners but in pleasure.

*Myr.* And I no pleasure but in parting not.  
You shall not force me from you.

*Sar.*

Think well of it—

It soon may be too late.

*Myr.*

So let it be ;

For then you cannot separate me from you.

*Sar.* And will not ; but I thought you wished it.

*Myr.*

I !

*Sar.* You spoke of your abasement.

*Myr.*

And I feel it

Deeply—more deeply than all things but love.

*Sar.* Then fly from it.

*Myr.*

'Twill not recall the past—

'Twill not restore my honour, nor my heart. 491

No—here I stand or fall. If that you conquer,  
I live to joy in your great triumph : should  
Your lot be different, I'll not weep, but share it.  
You did not doubt me a few hours ago.

*Sar.* Your courage never—nor your love till now ;  
And none could make me doubt it save yourself.  
Those words——

*Myr.* Were words. I pray you, let the proofs  
Be in the past acts you were pleased to praise  
This very night, and in my further bearing, 500  
Beside, wherever you are borne by fate.

*Sar.* I am content : and, trusting in my cause,  
Think we may yet be victors and return  
To peace—the only victory I covet.  
To me war is no glory—conquest no  
Renown. To be forced thus to uphold my right  
Sits heavier on my heart than all the wrongs<sup>i</sup>  
These men would bow me down with. Never, never  
Can I forget this night, even should I live  
To add it to the memory of others. 510  
I thought to have made mine inoffensive rule  
An era of sweet peace 'midst bloody annals,  
A green spot amidst desert centuries,  
On which the Future would turn back and smile,  
And cultivate, or sigh when it could not  
Recall Sardanapalus' golden reign.  
I thought to have made my realm a paradise,  
And every moon an epoch of new pleasures.  
I took the rabble's shouts for love—the breath  
Of friends for truth—the lips of woman for 520  
My only guerdon—so they are, my Myrrha :

[*He kisses her.*

Kiss me. Now let them take my realm and life !  
They shall have both, but never *thee* !

*Myr.* No, never !  
Man may despoil his brother man of all  
That 's great or glittering—kingdoms fall, hosts yield,  
Friends fail—slaves fly—and all betray—and, more  
Than all, the most indebted—but a heart  
That loves without self-love ! 'Tis here—now prove it.

i. *Is heavier sorrow than the wrong which.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]



*Enter SALEMENES.*

*Sal.* I sought you—How! *she* here again?

*Sar.* Return not  
Now to reproof: methinks your aspect speaks 530  
Of higher matter than a woman's presence.

*Sal.* The only woman whom it much imports me  
At such a moment now is safe in absence—  
The Queen's embarked.

*Sar.* And well? say that much.

*Sal.* Yes.  
Her transient weakness has passed o'er; at least,  
It settled into tearless silence: her  
Pale face and glittering eye, after a glance  
Upon her sleeping children, were still fixed  
Upon the palace towers as the swift galley  
Stole down the hurrying stream beneath the starlight;  
But she said nothing.

*Sar.* Would I felt no more 541  
Than she has said!

*Sal.* 'Tis now too late to feel.  
Your feelings cannot cancel a sole pang:  
To change them, my advices bring sure tidings  
That the rebellious Medes and Chaldees, marshalled  
By their two leaders, are already up  
In arms again; and, serrying their ranks,  
Prepare to attack: they have apparently  
Been joined by other Satraps.

*Sar.* What! more rebels?  
Let us be first, then.

*Sal.* That were hardly prudent 550  
Now, though it was our first intention. If  
By noon to-morrow we are joined by those  
I've sent for by sure messengers, we shall be  
In strength enough to venture an attack,  
Aye, and pursuit too; but, till then, my voice  
Is to await the onset.

*Sar.* I detest  
That waiting; though it seems so safe to fight  
Behind high walls, and hurl down foes into  
Deep fosses, or behold them sprawl on spikes

Strewed to receive them, still I like it not— 560  
My soul seems lukewarm ; but when I set on them,  
Though they were piled on mountains, I would have  
A pluck at them, or perish in hot blood !—  
Let me then charge.

*Sal.* You talk like a young soldier.

*Sar.* I am no soldier, but a man : speak not  
Of soldiership, I loathe the word, and those  
Who pride themselves upon it ; but direct me  
Where I may pour upon them.

*Sal.* You must spare  
To expose your life too hastily ; 'tis not  
Like mine or any other subject's breath : 570  
The whole war turns upon it—with it ; this  
Alone creates it, kindles, and may quench it—  
Prolong it—end it.

*Sar.* Then let us end both !  
'Twere better thus, perhaps, than prolong either ;  
I'm sick of one, perchance of both.

[*A trumpet sounds without.*

*Sal.* Hark !

*Sar.* Let us  
Reply, not listen.

*Sal.* And your wound !

*Sar.* 'Tis bound—  
'Tis healed—I had forgotten it. Away !  
A leech's lancet would have scratched me deeper ;  
The slave that gave it might be well ashamed  
To have struck so weakly.

*Sal.* Now, may none this hour  
Strike with a better aim !

*Sar.* Aye, if we conquer ; 581  
But if not, they will only leave to me  
A task they might have spared their king. Upon them !

[*Trumpet sounds again.*

*Sal.* I am with you.

*Sar.* Ho, my arms ! again, my arms !  
[*Exeunt.*

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The same Hall in the Palace.*

MYRRHA and BALEA.

Myr. (*at a window*).<sup>1</sup> The day at last has broken.  
What a night

Hath ushered it! How beautiful in heaven!  
Though varied with a transitory storm,  
More beautiful in that variety!  
How hideous upon earth! where Peace and Hope,  
And Love and Revel, in an hour were trampled  
By human passions to a human chaos,  
Not yet resolved to separate elements—  
'Tis warring still! And can the sun so rise,  
So bright, so rolling back the clouds into 10  
Vapours more lovely than the unclouded sky,  
With golden pinnacles, and snowy mountains,  
And billows purpler than the Ocean's, making  
In heaven a glorious mockery of the earth,  
So like we almost deem it permanent;  
So fleeting, we can scarcely call it aught

1. [Myrrha's apostrophe to the sunrise may be compared with the famous waking vision of the "Solitary" in the Second Book of the *Excursion* (*Works of Wordsworth*, 1889, p. 439)—

"The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,  
Was of a mighty city—boldly say  
A wilderness of building, sinking far  
And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth,  
Far sinking into splendour—without end!  
Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,  
With alabaster domes, and silver spires,  
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high  
Uplifted."

But the difference, even in form, between the two passages is more remarkable than the resemblance, and the interpretation, the moral of Byron's vision is distinct from, if not alien to, Wordsworth's. The "Solitary" sees all heaven opened; the revealed abode of spirits in beattitude—a refuge and a redemption from "this low world of care;" while Myrrha drinks in "enough of heaven," a medicament of "Sorrow and of Love," for the invigoration of "the common, heavy, human hours" of mortal existence. For a charge of "imitation," see *Works of Lord Byron*, 1832, xiii, 172, note 1. See, too, *Poetical Works, etc.*, 1891, p. 271, note 2.]

Beyond a vision, 'tis so transiently  
 Scattered along the eternal vault: and yet  
 It dwells upon the soul, and soothes the soul,  
 And blends itself into the soul, until 20  
 Sunrise and sunset form the haunted epoch  
 Of Sorrow and of Love; which they who mark not,  
 Know not the realms where those twin genii<sup>i</sup>  
 (Who chasten and who purify our hearts,  
 So that we would not change their sweet rebukes  
 For all the boisterous joys that ever shook  
 The air with clamour) build the palaces  
 Where their fond votaries repose and breathe  
 Briefly;—but in that brief cool calm inhale  
 Enough of heaven to enable them to bear 30  
 The rest of common, heavy, human hours,  
 And dream them through in placid sufferance,  
 Though seemingly employed like all the rest  
 Of toiling breathers in allotted tasks<sup>ii</sup>  
 Of pain or pleasure, *two* names for *one* feeling,  
 Which our internal, restless agony  
 Would vary in the sound, although the sense  
 Escapes our highest efforts to be happy.

*Bal.* You muse right calmly: and can you so watch  
 The sunrise which may be our last?

*Myr.* It is 40  
 Therefore that I so watch it, and reproach  
 Those eyes, which never may behold it more,  
 For having looked upon it oft, too oft,  
 Without the reverence and the rapture due  
 To that which keeps all earth from being as fragile  
 As I am in this form. Come, look upon it,  
 The Chaldee's God, which, when I gaze upon,  
 I grow almost a convert to your Baal.

*Bal.* As now he reigns in heaven, so once on earth  
 He swayed.

*Myr.* He sways it now far more, then; never

- i. *Sunrise and sunset form the epoch of  
 Sorrow and love; and they who mark them not  
 { Are fit for neither of those  
 { Can ne'er hold converse with these two.—[MS. M. erased.]*
- ii. *Of labouring wretches in allotted tasks.—[MS. M. erased.]*

Had earthly monarch half the power and glory  
Which centres in a single ray of his.

*Bal.* Surely he is a God !

*Myr.* So we Greeks deem too ;  
And yet I sometimes think that gorgeous orb  
Must rather be the abode of Gods than one  
Of the immortal sovereigns. Now he breaks  
Through all the clouds, and fills my eyes with light  
That shuts the world out. I can look no more.

*Bal.* Hark ! heard you not a sound ?

*Myr.* No, 'twas mere fancy ;  
They battle it beyond the wall, and not  
As in late midnight conflict in the very  
Chambers : the palace has become a fortress  
Since that insidious hour ; and here, within  
The very centre, girded by vast courts  
And regal halls of pyramid proportions,  
Which must be carried one by one before  
They penetrate to where they then arrived,  
We are as much shut in even from the sound  
Of peril as from glory.

*Bal.* But they reached,  
Thus far before.

*Myr.* Yes, by surprise, and were' 70  
Beat back by valour : now at once we have  
Courage and vigilance to guard us.

*Bal.* May they Prosper!

*Myr.* That is the prayer of many, and  
The dread of more : it is an anxious hour ;  
I strive to keep it from my thoughts. Alas !  
How vainly !

*Bal.* It is said the King's demeanour  
In the late action scarcely more appalled  
The rebels than astonished his true subjects.

*Myr.* 'Tis easy to astonish or appal  
The vulgar mass which moulds a horde of slaves ;      80  
But he did bravely.

*Bal.* Slew he not Beleses?  
I heard the soldiers say he struck him down.

*Myr.* The wretch was overthrown, but rescued to

Triumph, perhaps, o'er one who vanquished him  
In fight, as he had spared him in his peril ;  
And by that heedless pity risked a crown.

*Bal.*

Hark !

*Myr.* You are right ; some steps approach, but slowly.

*Enter Soldiers, bearing in SALEMENES wounded, with a broken javelin in his side : they seat him upon one of the couches which furnish the Apartment.*

*Myr.* Oh, Jove !

*Bal.*

Then all is over.

*Sal.*

That is false.

Hew down the slave who says so, if a soldier.

*Myr.* Spare him—he's none : a mere court butterfly,  
That flutter in the pageant of a monarch. 91

*Sal.* Let him live on, then.

*Myr.*

So wilt thou, I trust.

*Sal.* I fain would live this hour out, and the event,  
But doubt it. Wherefore did ye bear me here ?

*Sol.* By the King's order. When the javelin struck  
you,

You fell and fainted : 'twas his strict command  
To bear you to this hall.

*Sal.*

'Twas not ill done :

For seeming slain in that cold dizzy trance,  
The sight might shake our soldiers—but—'tis vain,  
I feel it ebbing !

*Myr.*

Let me see the wound ;

100

I am not quite skillless : in my native land  
'Tis part of our instruction. War being constant,  
We are nerved to look on such things.<sup>1</sup>

*Sol.*

Best extract

The javelin.

*Myr.*

Hold ! no, no, it cannot be.

*Sal.* I am sped, then !

*Myr.*

With the blood that fast must follow  
The extracted weapon, I do fear thy life.

*Sal.* And I not death. Where was the King when you  
Conveyed me from the spot where I was stricken ?

i. *We are used to such infictions.*—[MS. M. erased.]

*Sol.* Upon the same ground, and encouraging  
With voice and gesture the dispirited troops 110  
Who had seen you fall, and faltered back.

*Sal.* Whom heard ye  
Named next to the command?

*Sol.* I did not hear.

*Sal.* Fly, then, and tell him, 'twas my last request  
That Zames take my post until the junction,  
So hoped for, yet delayed, of Ofratanes,  
Satrap of Susa. Leave me here: our troops  
Are not so numerous as to spare your absence.

*Sol.* But Prince——

*Sal.* Hence, I say! Here 's a courtier and  
A woman, the best chamber company.  
As you would not permit me to expire 120  
Upon the field, I'll have no idle soldiers  
About my sick couch. Hence! and do my bidding!

[*Exeunt the Soldiers.*]

*Myr.* Gallant and glorious Spirit! must the earth  
So soon resign thee?

*Sal.* Gentle Myrrha, 'tis  
The end I would have chosen, had I saved  
The monarch or the monarchy by this;  
As 'tis, I have not outlived them.

*Myr.* You wax paler.

*Sal.* Your hand; this broken weapon but prolongs  
My pangs, without sustaining life enough  
To make me useful: I would draw it forth 130  
And my life with it, could I but hear how  
The fight goes.

*Enter SARDANAPALUS and Soldiers.*

*Sar.* My best brother!

*Sal.* And the battle  
Is lost?

*Sar.* (*despondingly*). You see me here.

*Sal.* I'd rather see you *thus*!

[*He draws out the weapon from the wound, and dies.*]

*Sar.* And *thus* I will be seen; unless the succour,  
The last frail reed of our beleagured hopes,

Arrive with Ofratanes.

*Myr.* Did you not  
Receive a token from your dying brother,  
Appointing Zames chief?

*Sar.* I did.

*Myr.* Where 's Zames?

*Sar.* Dead.

*Myr.* And Altada?

*Sar.* Dying.

*Myr.* Pania? Sfero?

*Sar.* Pania yet lives; but Sfero's fled or captive. 140  
I am alone.

*Myr.* And is all lost?

*Sar.* Our walls,  
Though thinly manned, may still hold out against  
Their present force, or aught save treachery :  
But i' the field——

*Myr.* I thought 'twas the intent  
Of Salemenes not to risk a sally  
Till ye were strengthened by the expected succours.

*Sar.* I over-ruled him.

*Myr.* Well, the *fault* 's a brave one.

*Sar.* But fatal. Oh, my brother! I would give  
These realms, of which thou wert the ornament,  
The sword and shield, the sole redeeming honour, 150  
To call back——But I will not weep for thee ;  
Thou shalt be mourned for as thou wouldst be mourned.  
It grieves me most that thou couldst quit this life  
Believing that I could survive what thou  
Hast died for——our long royalty of race.  
If I redeem it, I will give thee blood  
Of thousands, tears of millions, for atonement,  
(The tears of all the good are thine already).  
If not, we meet again soon,—if the spirit  
Within us lives beyond :—thou readest mine, 160  
And dost me justice now. Let me once clasp  
That yet warm hand, and fold that throbbless heart

[*Embraces the body.*  
To this which beats so bitterly. Now, bear  
The body hence.

*Sol.* Where?



*Sar.* To my proper chamber.  
Place it beneath my canopy, as though  
The King lay there : when this is done, we will  
Speak further of the rites due to such ashes.  
[*Exeunt Soldiers with the body of SALEMENES.*]

*Enter PANIA.*

*Sar.* Well, Pania ! have you placed the guards, and  
issued  
The orders fixed on ?

*Pan.* Sire, I have obeyed.

*Sar.* And do the soldiers keep their hearts up ?

*Pan.* Sire ?

*Sar.* I am answered ! When a king asks twice, and  
has

171

A question as an answer to *his* question,  
It is a portent. What ! they are disheartened ?

*Pan.* The death of Salemenes, and the shouts  
Of the exulting rebels on his fall,  
Have made them——

*Sar.* *Rage*—not droop—it should have been.  
We'll find the means to rouse them.

*Pan.* Such a loss  
Might sadden even a victory.

*Sar.* Alas !  
Who can so feel it as I feel ? but yet,  
Though cooped within these walls, they are strong, and we  
Have those without will break their way through hosts, 181  
To make their sovereign's dwelling what it was—  
A palace, not a prison—nor a fortress.

*Enter an Officer, hastily.*

*Sar.* Thy face seems ominous. Speak !

*Off.* I dare not.

*Sar.* Dare not ?

While millions dare revolt with sword in hand !  
That's strange. I pray thee break that loyal silence  
Which loathes to shock its sovereign ; we can hear  
Worse than thou hast to tell.

*Pan.* Proceed—thou hearest.

*Offi.* The wall which skirted near the river's brink  
Is thrown down by the sudden inundation 190  
Of the Euphrates, which now rolling, swoln  
From the enormous mountains where it rises,  
By the late rains of that tempestuous region,  
O'erfloods its banks, and hath destroyed the bulwark.

*Pan.* That's a black augury ! it has been said  
For ages, "That the City ne'er should yield  
"To man, until the River grew its foe."

*Sar.* I can forgive the omen, not the ravage.  
How much is swept down of the wall ?

*Offi.* About  
Some twenty stadia.<sup>1</sup>

*Sar.* And all this is left 200  
Pervious to the assailants ?

*Offi.* For the present  
The River's fury must impede the assault ;  
But when he shrinks into his wonted channel,  
And may be crossed by the accustomed barks,  
The palace is their own.

*Sar.* That shall be never.  
Though men, and gods, and elements, and omens,  
Have risen up 'gainst one who ne'er provoked them,  
My father's house shall never be a cave  
For wolves to horde and howl in.

*Pan.* With your sanction,  
I will proceed to the spot, and take such measures 210  
For the assurance of the vacant space  
As time and means permit.

*Sar.* About it straight,  
And bring me back, as speedily as full  
And fair investigation may permit,  
Report of the true state of this irruption  
Of waters. [*Exeunt PANIA and the Officer*]

*Myr.* Thus the very waves rise up  
Against you.

*Sar.* They are not my subjects, girl,  
And may be pardoned, since they can't be punished.

*Myr.* I joy to see this portent shakes you not.

*Sar.* I am past the fear of portents : they can tell me

1. About two miles and a half.

Nothing I have not told myself since midnight : 221  
Despair anticipates such things.

*Myr.* Despair !

*Sar.* No ; not despair precisely. When we know  
All that can come, and how to meet it, our  
Resolves, if firm, may merit a more noble  
Word than this is to give it utterance.  
But what are words to us ? we have well nigh done  
With them and all things.

*Myr.* Save *one deed*—the last  
And greatest to all mortals ; crowning act  
Of all that was, or is, or is to be— 230  
The only thing common to all mankind,  
So different in their births, tongues, sexes, natures,  
Hues, features, climes, times, feelings, intellects,<sup>i</sup>  
Without one point of union save in this—  
To which we tend, for which we're born, and thread  
The labyrinth of mystery, called life.

*Sar.* Our clue being well nigh wound out, let's be  
cheerful.  
They who have nothing more to fear may well  
Indulge a smile at that which once appalled ;  
As children at discovered bugbears.

*Re-enter PANIA.*

*Pan.* 'Tis 240  
As was reported : I have ordered there  
A double guard, withdrawing from the wall,  
Where it was strongest, the required addition  
To watch the breach occasioned by the waters.

*Sar.* You have done your duty faithfully, and as  
My worthy Pania ! further ties between us  
Draw near a close—I pray you take this key :  
[*Gives a key.*]

It opens to a secret chamber, placed  
Behind the couch in my own chamber—(Now  
Pressed by a nobler weight than e'er it bore— 250  
Though a long line of sovereigns have lain down  
Along its golden frame—as bearing for

i. *Complexions, climes, æras, and intellects.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

A time what late was Salemenes.)—Search  
The secret covert to which this will lead you ;  
'Tis full of treasure ;<sup>1</sup> take it for yourself  
And your companions :<sup>1</sup> there's enough to load ye,  
Though ye be many. Let the slaves be freed, too ;  
And all the inmates of the palace, of  
Whatever sex, now quit it in an hour.  
Thence launch the regal barks, once formed for pleasure,  
And now to serve for safety, and embark. 261  
The river's broad and swoln, and uncommanded,  
(More potent than a king) by these besiegers.  
Fly ! and be happy !

*Pan.* Under your protection !  
So you accompany your faithful guard.

*Sar.* No, Pania ! that must not be ; get thee hence,  
And leave me to my fate.

*Pan.* 'Tis the first time  
I ever disobeyed : but now——

*Sar.* So all men  
Dare beard me now, and Insolence within  
Apes Treason from without. Question no further ; 270  
'Tis my command, my last command. Wilt *thou*  
Oppose it? *thou* !

*Pan.* But yet—not yet.

*Sar.* Well, then,  
Swear that you will obey when I shall give  
The signal.

*Pan.* With a heavy but true heart,  
I promise.

*Sar.* 'Tis enough. Now order here  
Faggots, pine-nuts, and withered leaves, and such  
Things as catch fire and blaze with one sole spark ;  
Bring cedar, too, and precious drugs, and spices,  
And mighty planks, to nourish a tall pile ;  
Bring frankincense and myrrh, too, for it is 280  
For a great sacrifice I build the pyre !

i. *Ye will find the crevice  
To which the key fits, with a little care.*—[MS. M. erased.]

1. [Athenæus represents the treasures which Sardanapalus placed in the chamber erected on his funeral pile as amounting to a thousand myriads of talents of gold, and ten times as many talents of silver.]

And heap them round yon throne.

*Pan.*

My Lord!

*Sar.*

I have said it,

And *you* have sworn.

*Pan.*

And could keep my faith

Without a vow.

[*Exit PANIA.*]

*Myr.*

What mean you?

*Sar.*

You shall know

Anon—what the whole earth shall ne'er forget.

*PANIA, returning with a Herald.*

*Pan.* My King, in going forth upon my duty,  
This herald has been brought before me, craving  
An audience.

*Sar.*

Let him speak.

*Her.*

The *King* Arbaces——

*Sar.* What, crowned already?—But, proceed.

*Her.*

Beleses,

The anointed High-priest——

*Sar.*

Of what god or demon?

With new kings rise new altars. But, proceed; 291

You are sent to prate your master's will, and not  
Reply to mine.

*Her.*

And Satrap Ofratanes——

*Sar.* Why, *he* is *ours*.

*Her.* (*showing a ring*). Be sure that he is now  
In the camp of the conquerors; behold  
His signet ring.

*Sar.*

'Tis his. A worthy triad!

Poor Salemenes! thou hast died in time

To see one treachery the less: this man

Was thy true friend and my most trusted subject.

Proceed.

*Her.*

They offer thee thy life, and freedom 300

Of choice to single out a residence

In any of the further provinces,

Guarded and watched, but not confined in person,

Where thou shalt pass thy days in peace; but on

Condition that the three young princes are

Given up as hostages.

*Sar. (ironically).* The generous Victors !

*Her.* I wait the answer.

*Sar.* Answer, slave ! How long  
Have slaves decided on the doom of kings ?

*Her.* Since they were free.

*Sar.* Mouthpiece of mutiny !  
Thou at the least shalt learn the penalty 310  
Of treason, though its proxy only. Pania !  
Let his head be thrown from our walls within  
The rebels' lines, his carcass down the river.  
Away with him ! [*PANIA and the Guards seizing him.*]

*Pan.* I never yet obeyed  
Your orders with more pleasure than the present.  
Hence with him, soldiers ! do not soil this hall  
Of royalty with treasonable gore ;  
Put him to rest without.

*Her.* A single word :  
My office, King, is sacred.

*Sar.* And what 's mine ?  
That thou shouldst come and dare to ask of me 320  
To lay it down ?

*Her.* I but obeyed my orders,  
At the same peril if refused, as now  
Incurred by my obedience.

*Sar.* So there are  
New monarchs of an hour's growth as despotic  
As sovereigns swathed in purple, and enthroned  
From birth to manhood !

*Her.* My life waits your breath.  
Yours (I speak humbly)—but it may be—yours  
May also be in danger scarce less imminent :  
Would it then suit the last hours of a line  
Such as is that of Nimrod, to destroy 330  
A peaceful herald, unarmed, in his office ;  
And violate not only all that man  
Holds sacred between man and man—but that  
More holy tie which links us with the Gods ?

*Sar.* He's right.—Let him go free.—My life's last act  
Shall not be one of wrath. Here, fellow, take  
[*Gives him a golden cup from a table near.*]  
This golden goblet, let it hold your wine,



Be such as will not speedily exhaust  
 Its own too subtle flame; nor yet be quenched 360  
 With aught officious aid would bring to quell it.  
 Let the throne form the *core* of it; I would not  
 Leave that, save fraught with fire unquenchable,  
 To the new comers. Frame the whole as if  
 'Twere to enkindle the strong tower of our  
 Inveterate enemies. Now it bears an aspect!  
 How say you, Pania, will this pile suffice  
 For a King's obsequies?

*Pan.* Aye, for a kingdom's.

I understand you, now.

*Sar.* And blame me?

*Pan.* No—

Let me but fire the pile, and share it with you. 370

*Myr.* That *duty*'s mine.

*Pan.* A woman's!

*Myr.* 'Tis the soldier's

Part to die *for* his sovereign, and why not  
 The woman's with her lover?

*Pan.* 'Tis most strange!

*Myr.* But not so rare, my Pania, as thou think'st it.  
 In the mean time, live thou.—Farewell! the pile  
 Is ready.

beams, and there all the walls of it he made of numerous thick planks, so that it was impossible to escape out of it. . . . And . . . he bade the slaves set fire to the pile; and it was fifteen days burning. And those who saw the smoke wondered, and thought that he was celebrating a great sacrifice, but the eunuchs alone knew what was really being done. And in this way Sardanapalus, who had spent his life in extraordinary luxury, died with as much magnanimity as possible."—Athenæus, *Deipnosophistæ*, bk. xii. cap. 38.

See *Abydenus apud Eusebium*, Præp. Ev. 9. 41. 4; Euseb., *Chron.*, 1878, p. 42, ed. A. Schoene.

Saracus was the last king of Assyria, and being invaded by Cyaxares and a faithless general Nabopolassar . . . "unable to resist them, took counsel of despair, and after all means of resistance were exhausted, burned himself in his palace."

"The self-immolation of Saracus has a parallel in the conduct of the Israelitish king Zimri, who, 'when he saw that the city was taken, went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him, and died' (1 Kings xvi. 18); and again in that of the Persian governor Boges, who burnt himself with his wives and children at Eion (Herod., vii. 107)."—*The Five Great Monarchies, etc.*, by Rev. G. Rawlinson, 1871, ii. 232, note 4.]



*Pan.* I should shame to leave my sovereign  
With but a single female to partake  
His death.

*Sar.* Too many far have heralded  
Me to the dust already. Get thee hence ;  
Enrich thee.

*Pan.* And live wretched !

*Sar.* Think upon 380  
Thy vow :—'tis sacred and irrevocable.

*Pan.* Since it is so, farewell.

*Sar.* Search well my chamber,  
Feel no remorse at bearing off the gold ;  
Remember, what you leave you leave the slaves  
Who slew me : and when you have borne away  
All safe off to your boats, blow one long blast  
Upon the trumpet as you quit the palace.  
The river's brink is too remote, its stream  
Too loud at present to permit the echo  
To reach distinctly from its banks. Then fly,— 390  
And as you sail, turn back ; but still keep on  
Your way along the Euphrates : if you reach  
The land of Paphlagonia, where the Queen  
Is safe with my three sons in Cotta's court,  
Say what you *saw* at parting, and request  
That she remember what I *said* at one  
Parting more mournful still.

*Pan.* That royal hand !  
Let me then once more press it to my lips ;  
And these poor soldiers who throng round you, and  
Would fain die with you !

[*The Soldiers and PANIA throng round him, kissing  
his hand and the hem of his robe.*]

*Sar.* My best ! my last friends ! 400  
Let's not unman each other : part at once :  
All farewells should be sudden, when for ever,  
Else they make an eternity of moments,  
And clog the last sad sands of life with tears.  
Hence, and be happy : trust me, I am not  
*Now* to be pitied ; or far more for what  
Is past than present ;—for the future, 'tis  
In the hands of the deities, if such

There be : I shall know soon. Farewell—Farewell.

[*Exeunt PANIA and Soldiers.*]

*Myr.* These men were honest : it is comfort still 410  
That our last looks should be on loving faces.

*Sar.* And *lovely* ones, my beautiful !—but hear me !  
If at this moment,—for we now are on  
The brink,—thou feel'st an inward shrinking from  
This leap through flame into the future, say it :  
I shall not love thee less ; nay, perhaps more,  
For yielding to thy nature : and there's time  
Yet for thee to escape hence.

*Myr.* Shall I light  
One of the torches which lie heaped beneath  
The ever-burning lamp that burns without, 420  
Before Baal's shrine, in the adjoining hall ?

*Sar.* Do so. Is that thy answer ?

*Myr.*

Thou shalt see.

[*Exit MYRRHA.*]

*Sar. (solus).* She's firm. My fathers ! whom I will  
rejoin,

It may be, purified by death from some  
Of the gross stains of too material being,  
I would not leave your ancient first abode  
To the defilement of usurping bondmen ;  
If I have not kept your inheritance  
As ye bequeathed it, this bright part of it,  
Your treasure—your abode—your sacred relics 430  
Of arms, and records—monuments, and spoils,  
In which *they* would have revelled, I bear with me  
To you in that absorbing element,  
Which most personifies the soul as leaving  
The least of matter unconsumed before  
Its fiery workings :—and the light of this  
Most royal of funereal pyres shall be<sup>i</sup>  
Not a mere pillar formed of cloud and flame,  
A beacon in the horizon for a day,  
And then a mount of ashes—but a light<sup>ii</sup> 440  
To lesson ages, rebel nations, and  
Voluptuous princes. Time shall quench full many

i. *Funereal* —.—[*MS. M.*]

ii. *And strew the earth with ashes* —.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

A people's records, and a hero's acts ;  
Sweep empire after empire, like this first  
Of empires, into nothing ; but even then  
Shall spare this deed of mine, and hold it up  
A problem few dare imitate, and none  
Despise—but, it may be, avoid the life  
Which led to such a consummation.

MYRRHA *returns with a lighted Torch in one Hand, and  
a Cup in the other.*

Myr.

Lo !

I've lit the lamp which lights us to the stars. 450

Sar. And the cup ?

Myr.

'Tis my country's custom to  
Make a libation to the Gods.

Sar.

And mine

To make libations amongst men. I've not  
Forgot the custom ; and although alone,  
Will drain one draught in memory of many  
A joyous banquet past.

[SARDANAPALUS *takes the cup, and after drinking  
and tinkling the reversed cup, as a drop falls,  
exclaims—*

And this libation

Is for the excellent Beleses.

Myr.

Why

Dwells thy mind rather upon that man's name  
Than on his mate's in villany ?

Sar.

The other

Is a mere soldier, a mere tool, a kind 460  
Of human sword in a friend's hand ; the other  
Is master-mover of his warlike puppet ;  
But I dismiss them from my mind.—Yet pause,  
My Myrrha ! dost thou truly follow me,  
Freely and fearlessly ?

Myr.

And dost thou think  
A Greek girl dare not do for love, that which  
An Indian widow braves for custom ?<sup>i</sup>

i.

— *And what is there  
An Indian widow dares for custom which  
A Greek girl —. — [MS. M. crased.]*

*Sar.*

Then

We but await the signal.

*Myr.*

It is long

In sounding.

*Sar.* Now, farewell ; one last embrace.*Myr.* Embrace, but *not* the last ; there is one more. 470*Sar.* True, the commingling fire will mix our ashes.*Myr.* And pure as is my love to thee, shall they,  
Purged from the dross of earth, and earthly passion,  
Mix pale with thine. A single thought yet irks me.*Sar.* Say it.*Myr.* It is that no kind hand will gather

The dust of both into one urn.

*Sar.*

The better :

Rather let them be borne abroad upon

The winds of heaven, and scattered into air,

Than be polluted more by human hands

Of slaves and traitors. In this blazing palace, 480

And its enormous walls of reeking ruin,

We leave a nobler monument than Egypt

Hath piled in her brick mountains, o'er dead kings,<sup>1</sup>Or *kine*—for none know whether those proud piles

Be for their monarch, or their ox-god Apis :

So much for monuments that have forgotten

Their very record !

*Myr.*

Then farewell, thou earth !

And loveliest spot of earth ! farewell, Ionia !

Be thou still free and beautiful, and far

Aloof from desolation ! My last prayer 490

Was for thee, my last thoughts, save *one*, were of thee !*Sar.* And that ?*Myr.*

Is yours.

[*The trumpet of PANIA sounds without.*

1. [Bishop Heber (*Quarterly Review*, July, 1821, vol. xxvii. p. 503) takes exception to these lines on the ground that they "involve an anachronism, inasmuch as, whatever date be assigned to the erection of the earlier pyramids, there can be no reason for apprehending that, at the fall of Nineveh, and while the kingdom and hierarchy of Egypt subsisted in their full splendour, the destination of those immense fabrics could have been a matter of doubt. . . . Herodotus, three hundred years later, may have been misinformed on these points," etc., etc. According to modern Egyptology, the erection of the "earlier pyramids" was an event of remotest antiquity when the Assyrian Empire was in its infancy.]

Sar.

Hark !

Myr.

Now !

Sar.

Adieu, Assyria !

I loved thee well, my own, my fathers' land,  
And better as my country than my kingdom.

I sated thee with peace and joys ; and this  
Is my reward ! and now I owe thee nothing,  
Not even a grave.

[*He mounts the pile.*

Now, Myrrha !

Myr.

Art thou ready ?

Sar. As the torch in thy grasp.

[*MYRRHA fires the pile.*

Myr.

'Tis fired ! I come.

[*As MYRRHA springs forward to throw herself into  
the flames, the Curtain falls.*<sup>1</sup>

L.

End of Act fifth.—B.

Ravenne.

May 27<sup>th</sup> 1821.

Mem.—I began the drama on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January, 1821, and continued the two first acts very slowly and at long intervals. The three last acts were written since the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, 1821 (this present month, that is to say in a fortnight).

# THE TWO FOSCARI:<sup>1</sup>

## AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.<sup>2</sup>

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"The *father* softens, but the *governor's* resolved."—*Critic*.<sup>3</sup>

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1. [The MS. of *The Two Foscari* is now in the possession of H.R.H. the Princess of Wales.]

2. [Begun June the 12th, completed July the 9th, Ravenna, 1821.—*Byron MS.*]

3. [*Gov.* "The *father* softens—but the *governor* is fixed."  
*Dingle.* "Aye that antithesis of persons is a most established figure."  
 —*Critic*, act ii. sc. 2.]

Byron may have guessed that this passage would be quoted against him, and, by taking it as a motto, hoped to anticipate or disarm ridicule; or he may have selected it out of bravado, as though, forsooth, the public were too stupid to find him out.]

T

[*The Two Foscari* was produced at Drury Lane Theatre April 7, and again on April 18 and April 25, 1838. Macready played "Frances Foscari," Mr. Anderson "Jacopo Foscari," and Miss Helen Faucit "Marina."

According to the *Times*, April 9, 1838, "Miss Faucit's Marina, the most energetic part of the whole, was clever, and showed a careful attention to the points which might be made."

Macready notes in his diary, April 7, 1838 (*Reminiscences*, 1875, ii. 106): "Acted Foscari very well. Was very warmly received . . . was called for at the end of the tragedy, and received by the whole house standing up and waving handkerchiefs with great enthusiasm. Dickens, Forster, Procter, Browning, Talfourd, all came into my room."]

T

## INTRODUCTION TO *THE TWO FOSCARI*.

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THE *Two Foscari* was begun on June 12, and finished, within the month, on July 9, 1821. Byron was still in the vein of the historic drama, though less concerned with "ancient chroniclers" and original "authorities" (*vide ante*, Preface to *Marino Faliero*, vol. iv. p. 332) than heretofore. "The Venetian play," he tells Murray, July 14, 1821, is "rigidly historical;" but he seems to have depended for his facts, not on Sanudo or Navagero, but on Daru's *Histoire de la République de Venise* (1821, ii. 520-537), and on Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques . . . du Moyen Âge* (1815, x. 36-46). The story of the Two Doges, so far as it concerns the characters and action of Byron's play, may be briefly re-told. It will be found to differ in some important particulars from the extracts from Daru and Sismondi which Byron printed in his "Appendix to the *Two Foscari*" (*Sardanapalus*, etc., 1821, pp. 305-324), and no less from a passage in Smedley's *Sketches from Venetian History* (1832, ii. 93-105), which was substituted for the French "Pièces justificatives," in the collected edition of 1832-1835, xiii. 198-202, and the octavo edition of 1837, etc., pp. 790, 791.

Francesco, son of Nicolò Foscari, was born in 1373. He was nominated a member of the Council of Ten in 1399, and, after holding various offices of state, elected Doge in 1423. His dukedom, the longest on record, lasted till 1457. He was married, in 1395, to Maria, daughter of Andrea Priuli, and, *en secondes nocés*, to Maria, or Marina, daughter of Bartolommeo Nani. By his two wives he was the father of ten children—five sons and five daughters. Of the five sons, four died of the plague, and the fifth, Jacopo, lived to be the cause, if not the hero, of a tragedy.

The younger of the "Two Foscari" was a man of some cultivation, a collector and student of Greek manuscripts, well-mannered, and of ready wit, a child and lover of Venice, but indifferent to her ideals and regardless of her prejudices and restrictions. He seems to have begun life in a blaze of popularity, the admired of all admirers. His wedding with Lucrezia Contarini (January, 1441) was celebrated with a



novel and peculiar splendour. Gorgeous youths, Companions of the Hose (*della calza*), in jackets of crimson velvet, with slashed sleeves lined with squirrel fur, preceded and followed the bridegroom's train. A hundred bridesmaids accompanied the bride. Her dowry exceeded 16,000 ducats, and her jewels, which included a necklace worn by a Queen of Cyprus, were "rich and rare." And the maiden herself was a pearl of great price. "She behaved," writes her brother, "and does behave, so well beyond what could have been looked for. I believe she is inspired by God!"

Jacopo had everything which fortune could bestow, but he lacked a capacity for right conduct. Four years after his marriage (February 17, 1445) an accusation was laid before the Ten (Romanin, *Storia*, etc., iv. 266) that, contrary to the law embodied in the Ducal *Promissione*, he had accepted gifts of jewels and money, not only from his fellow-citizens, but from his country's bitterest enemy, Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan. Jacopo fled to Trieste, and in his absence the Ten, supported by a giunta of ten, on their own authority and independently of the Doge, sentenced him to perpetual banishment at Nauplia, in Roumania. One of the three *Capi di' dieci* was Ermolao (or *Venetico* Almorò) Donato, of whom more hereafter. It is to be noted that this sentence was never carried into effect. At the end of four months, thanks to the intervention of five members of the Ten, he was removed from Trieste to Treviso, and, two years later (September 13, 1447), out of consideration to the Doge, who pleaded that the exile of his only son prevented him from giving his whole heart and soul to the Republic, permitted to return to Venice. So ends the first chapter of Jacopo's misadventures. He stands charged with unlawful, if not criminal, appropriation of gifts and moneys. He had been punished, but less than he deserved, and, for his father's sake, the sentence of exile had been altogether remitted.

Three years went by, and once again, January, 1451, a charge was preferred against Jacopo Foscari, and on this occasion he was arrested and brought before the Ten. He was accused of being implicated in the murder of Ermolao Donato, who was assassinated November 5, 1450, on leaving the Ducal Palace, where he had been attending the Council of the Pregadi. On the morning after the murder Benedetto Gritti, one of the "avvogadori di Commun," was at Mestre, some five miles from Venice, and, happening to accost a servant of Jacopo's who was loading a barge with wood, asked for the latest news from Venice, and got as answer, "Donato has been murdered!" The possession of the news some hours before it had been made public, and the

fact that the newsmonger had been haunting the purlieus of the Ducal Palace on the previous afternoon, enabled the Ten to convict Jacopo. They alleged (Decree of X., March 26, 1451) that other evidence ("*testificationes et scripturæ*") was in their possession, and they pointed to the prisoner's obstinate silence on the rack—a silence unbroken save by "several incantations and magic words which fell from him," as a confirmation of his guilt. Moreover, it was "for the advantage of the State from many points of view" that convicted and condemned he should be. The question of his innocence or guilt (complicated by the report or tradition that one Nicolò Erizzo confessed on his death-bed that he had assassinated Donato for reasons of his own) is still under discussion. Berlan (*I due Foscari*, etc., 1852, p. 36) sums up against him. It may, however, be urged in favour of Jacopo that the Ten did not produce or quote the *scripturæ et testimonies* which convinced them of his guilt; that they stopped short of the death-penalty, and pronounced a sentence inadequate to the crime; and, lastly, that not many years before they had taken into consideration the possibility and advisability of poisoning Filippo Visconti, an event which would, no doubt, have been "to the advantage of the State from many points of view."

Innocent or guilty, he was sentenced to perpetual banishment to the city of Candia, on the north coast of the island of Crete; and, guilty or innocent, Jacopo was not the man to make the best of what remained to him and submit to fate. Intrigue he must, and, five years later (June, 1456), a report reached Venice that papers had been found in his possession, some relating to the Duke of Milan, calculated to excite "nuovi scandali e disordini," and others in cypher, which the Ten could not read. Over and above these papers there was direct evidence that Jacopo had written to the *Imperatore dei Turchi*, imploring him to send his galley and take him away from Candia. Here was a fresh instance of treachery to the Republic, and, July 21, 1456, Jacopo returned to Venice under the custody of Lorenzo Loredano.

According to Romanin (*Storia*, etc., iv. 284), he was not put to the torture, but confessed his guilt spontaneously, pleading, by way of excuse, that the letter to the Duke of Milan had been allowed to fall into the hands of spies, with a view to his being recalled to Venice and obtaining a glimpse of his parents and family, even at a risk of a fresh trial. On the other hand, the *Dolfin Cronaca*, the work of a kinsman of the Foscari, which records Jacopo's fruitless appeal to the sorrowful but inexorable Doge, and other incidents of a personal nature, testifies, if not to torture on

the rack, "to mutilation by thirty strokes of the lash." Be that as it may, he was once more condemned to lifelong exile, with the additional penalty that he should be imprisoned for a year. He sailed from Venice July 31, 1456, and died at Candia, January 12, 1457. Jacopo's misconduct and consequent misfortune overshadowed the splendour of his father's reign, and, in very truth "brought his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

After his son's death, the aged Doge, now in his eighty-fifth year, retired to his own apartments, and refused to preside at Councils of State. The Ten, who in 1446 had yielded to the Doge's plea that a father fretting for an exiled son could not discharge his public duties, were instant that he should abdicate the dukedom on the score of decrepitude. Accounts differ as to the mode in which he received the sentence of deposition. It is certain that he was compelled to abdicate on Sunday morning, October 23, 1457, but was allowed a breathing-space of a few days to make his arrangements for quitting the Ducal Palace.

On Monday, October 24, the Great Council met to elect his successor, and sat with closed doors till Sunday, October 30.

On Thursday, October 27, Francesco, heedless of a suggestion that he should avoid the crowd, descended the Giants' Staircase for the last time, and, says the *Dolfin Cronaca*, "after crossing the courtyard, went out by the door leading to the prisons, and entered his boat by the Ponte di Paglia." "He was dressed," says another chronicle (*August. Cod.* i, cl. vii.), "in a scarlet mantle, from which the fur lining had been taken," surmounted by a scarlet hood, an old friend which he had worn when his ducal honours were new, and which he had entrusted to his wife's care to be preserved for "red" days and festivals of State. "In his hand he held his staff, as he walked very slowly. His brother Marco was by his side, behind him were cousins and grandsons . . . and in this way he went to his own house."

On Sunday, October 30, Pasquale Malipiero was declared Doge, and two days after, All Saints' Day, at the first hour of the morning, Francesco Foscari died. If the interval between ten o'clock on Sunday night and one o'clock on Tuesday morning disproves the legend that the discrowned Doge ruptured a blood-vessel at the moment when the bell was tolling for the election of his successor, the truth remains that, old as he was, he died of a broken heart.

His predecessor, Tomaso Mocenigo, had prophesied on his death-bed that if the Venetians were to make Foscari Doge they would forfeit their "gold and silver, their honour and renown." "From your position of lords," said he, "you

will sink to that of vassals and servants to men of arms." The prophecy was fulfilled. "If we look," writes Mr. H. F. Brown (*Venice, etc.*, 1893, p. 306), "at the sum-total of Foscari's reign . . . we find that the Republic had increased her land territory by the addition of two great provinces, Bergamo and Brescia . . . But the price had been enormous . . . her debt rose from 6,000,000 to 13,000,000 ducats. Venetian funds fell to 18½. . . . Externally there was much pomp and splendour. . . . But underneath this bravery there lurked the official corruption of the nobles, the suspicion of the Ten, the first signs of bank failures, the increase in the national debt, the fall in the value of the funds. Land wars and landed possessions drew the Venetians from the sea to *terra ferma*. . . . The beginning of the end had arrived." (See *Two Doges of Venice*, by Alethea Wiel, 1891; *I due Foscari, Memorie Storiche Critiche*, di Francesco Berlan, 1852; *Storia Documentata di Venezia*, di S. Romanin, 1855, vol. iv.; *Die beiden Foscari*, von Richard Senger, 1878. For reviews, etc., of *The Two Foscari*, vide ante, "Introduction to *Sardanapalus*," p. 5.)

Both Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh*, and Heber in the *Quarterly Review*, took exception to the character of Jacopo Foscari, in accordance with the Horatian maxim, "Incredulus odi." "If," said Jeffrey, "he had been presented to the audience wearing out his heart in exile, . . . we might have caught some glimpse of the nature of his motives." As it is (in obedience to the "unities") "we first meet with him led from the 'Question,' and afterwards . . . clinging to the dungeon walls of his native city, and expiring from his dread of leaving them." The situation lacks conviction.

"If," argued Heber, "there ever existed in nature a case so extraordinary as that of a man who gravely preferred tortures and a dungeon at home, to a temporary residence in a beautiful island and a fine climate; it is what few can be made to believe, and still fewer to sympathize with."

It was, no doubt, with reference to these criticisms that Byron told Medwin (*Conversations*, 1824, p. 173) that it was no invention of his that the "young Foscari should have a sickly affection for his native city. . . . I painted the men as I found them, as they were—not as the critics would have them. . . . But no painting, however highly coloured, can give an idea of the intensity of a Venetian's affection for his native city."

Goethe, on the other hand, was "not careful" to note these inconsistencies and perplexities. He thought that the dramatic handling of *The Two Foscari* was "worthy of great praise," was "admirable!" (*Conversations with Goethe* 1874, p. 265).

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



### MEN.

FRANCIS FOSCARI, *Doge of Venice.*

JACOPO FOSCARI, *Son of the Doge.*

JAMES LOREDANO, *a Patrician.*

MARCO MEMMO, *a Chief of the Forty.*

BARBARIGO, *a Senator.*

*Other Senators, The Council of Ten, Guards, Attendants,  
etc., etc.*

### WOMAN.

MARINA, *Wife of young FOSCARI.*

SCENE—The Ducal Palace, Venice.

# THE TWO FOSCARI.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Ducal Palace.*

*Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO, meeting.*

*Lor.* WHERE is the prisoner ?

*Bar.* Reposing from  
The Question.

*Lor.* The hour's past—fixed yesterday  
For the resumption of his trial.—Let us  
Rejoin our colleagues in the council, and  
Urge his recall.

*Bar.* Nay, let him profit by  
A few brief minutes for his tortured limbs ;  
He was o'erwrought by the Question yesterday,  
And may die under it if now repeated.<sup>1 1</sup>

i. — *too soon repeated.*—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [It is a moot point whether Jacopo Foscari was placed on the rack on the occasion of his third trial. The original document of the X. (July 23, 1456) runs thus : "Si videtur vobis per ea que dicta et lecta sunt, quod *procedatur* contra Ser Jacobum Foscari ;" and it is argued (see F. Berlan, *I due Foscari, etc.*, 1852, p. 57), (1) that the word *procedatur* is not a euphemism for "tortured," but should be rendered "judgment be given against ;" (2) that if the X. had decreed torture, torture would have been expressly enjoined ; and (3) that as the decrees of the Council were not divulged, there was no motive for ambiguity. S. Romanin (*Storia Documentata, etc.*, 1853, iv. 284) and R. Senger (*Die beiden Foscari*, 1878, p. 116) take the same view. On the other hand, Miss A. Wiel (*Two Doges of Venice*, 1891, p. 107) points out that, according to the *Dolfin Cronaca*, which Berlan did not consult, Jacopo was in a "mutilated" condition when the trial was over, and he was permitted to take a last farewell of his wife and

*Lor.* Well?

*Bar.* I yield not to you in love of justice,  
Or hate of the ambitious Foscari, 10  
Father and son, and all their noxious race;  
But the poor wretch has suffered beyond Nature's  
Most stoical endurance.

*Lor.* Without owning  
His crime?

*Bar.* Perhaps without committing any.  
But he avowed the letter to the Duke  
Of Milan, and his sufferings half atone for  
Such weakness

*Lor.* We shall see.

*Bar.* You, Loredano,  
Pursue hereditary hate too far.

*Lor.* How far?

*Bar.* To extermination.

*Lor.* When they are  
Extinct, you may say this.—Let 's in to council. 20

*Bar.* Yet pause—the number of our colleagues is not  
Complete yet; two are wanting ere we can  
Proceed.

*Lor.* And the chief judge, the Doge?

*Bar.* No—he,  
With more than Roman fortitude, is ever  
First at the board in this unhappy process  
Against his last and only son.<sup>1</sup>

*Lor.* True—true—  
His last.

children in Torricella. Goethe (*Conversations*, 1874, pp. 264, 265) did not share Eckermann's astonishment that Byron "could dwell so long on this torturing subject." "He was always a self-tormentor, and hence such subjects were his darling theme."

1. [It is extremely improbable that Francesco Foscari was present in person at the third or two preceding trials of his son. As may be gathered from the *parte* of the Council of Ten relating to the first trial, there was a law which prescribed the contrary: "In ipsius Domini Ducis præsentiâ de rebus ad ipsum, vel ad filios suos tangentibus non tractetur, loquatur vel consulatur, sicut non potest (*fieri*) quando tractatur de rebus tangentibus ad attinentes Domini Ducis." The fact that "Nos Franciscus Foscari," etc., stood at the commencement of the decree of exile may have given rise to the tradition that the Doge, like a Roman father, tried and condemned his son. (See Berlan's *I due Foscari*, p. 13.)]

Bar. Will nothing move you?

Lor. *Feels he, think you?*

Bar. He shows it not.

Lor. I have marked *that*—the wretch!

Bar. But yesterday, I hear, on his return  
To the ducal chambers, as he passed the threshold 30  
The old man fainted.

Lor. It begins to work, then.

Bar. The work is half your own.

Lor. And should be *all* mine—  
My father and my uncle are no more.

Bar. I have read their epitaph, which says they died  
By poison.<sup>1</sup>

Lor. When the Doge declared that he  
Should never deem himself a sovereign till  
The death of Peter Loredano, both  
The brothers sickened shortly:—he *is* Sovereign.

Bar. A wretched one.

Lor. What should they be who make  
Orphans?

Bar. But *did* the Doge make you so?

Lor. Yes. 40

Bar. What solid proofs?

Lor. When Princes set themselves  
To work in secret, proofs and process are

1. [Pietro Loredano, admiral of the Venetian fleet, died November 11, 1438. His death was sudden and suspicious, for he was taken with violent pains and spasms after presiding at a banquet in honour of his victories over the Milanese; and, when his illness ended fatally it was remembered that the Doge had publicly declared that so long as the admiral lived he would never be *de facto* Prince of the Republic. Jacopo Loredano chose to put his own interpretation on this outburst of impatience, and inscribed on his father's monument in the Church of the Monastery of Sant' Elena, in the Isola della Santa Lena, the words, "Per insidias hostium veneno sublatus." (See *Ecclesia Veneta*, by Flaminio Cornaro, 1749, ix. 193, 194; see, too, Cicogna's *Inscriptioni Veneziane*, 1830, iii. 381.)

Not long afterwards Marco Loredano, the admiral's brother, met with a somewhat similar fate. He had been despatched by the X. to Legnano, to investigate the conduct of Andrea Donato, the Doge's brother-in-law, who was suspected of having embezzled the public moneys. His report was unfavourable to Donato, and, shortly after, he too fell sick and died. It is most improbable that the Doge was directly or indirectly responsible for the death of either brother; but there was an hereditary feud, and the libellous epitaph was a move in the game.]



Alike made difficult ; but I have such  
Of the first, as shall make the second needless.

*Bar.* But you will move by law ?

*Lor.* By all the laws  
Which he would leave us.

*Bar.* They are such in this  
Our state as render retribution easier  
Than 'mongst remoter nations. Is it true  
That you have written in your books of commerce,  
(The wealthy practice of our highest nobles) 50  
"Doge Foscari, my debtor for the deaths  
Of Marco and Pietro Loredano,  
My sire and uncle ?" <sup>1</sup>

*Lor.* It is written thus.

*Bar.* And will you leave it unerased ?

*Lor.* Till balanced.

*Bar.* And how ?

[*Two Senators pass over the stage, as in their way to  
"the Hall of the Council of Ten."*]

*Lor.* You see the number is complete.  
Follow me. [Exit LOREDANO.]

*Bar.* (*solus*). Follow thee ! I have followed long  
Thy path of desolation, as the wave  
Sweeps after that before it, alike whelming <sup>1</sup>  
The wreck that creaks to the wild winds, and wretch  
Who shrieks within its riven ribs, as gush 60  
The waters through them ; but this son and sire  
Might move the elements to pause, and yet  
Must I on hardly like them—Oh ! would  
I could as blindly and remorselessly !—  
Lo, where he comes !—Be still, my heart ! they are  
Thy foes, must be thy victims : wilt thou beat  
For those who almost broke thee ?

i. — checked by nought  
The vessel that creaks —.—[MS. M. erased.]

i. [Daru gives Palazzi's *Fasti Ducales* and *L'Histoire Vénitienne* of Vianolo as his authorities for this story.]

*Enter Guards, with young FOSCARI as Prisoner, etc.*

*Guard.* Let him rest.  
Signor, take time.

*Jac. Fos.* I thank thee, friend, I'm feeble ;  
But thou mayst stand reprov'd.

*Guard.* I'll stand the hazard.

*Jac. Fos.* That's kind :—I meet some pity, but no  
mercy ;<sup>1</sup> 70  
This is the first.

*Guard.* And might be the last, did they  
Who rule behold us.

*Bar. (advancing to the Guard).* There is one who does :  
Yet fear not ; I will neither be thy judge  
Nor thy accuser ; though the hour is past,  
Wait their last summons—I am of "the Ten,"<sup>1</sup>  
And waiting for that summons, sanction you  
Even by my presence : when the last call sounds,  
We'll in together.—Look well to the prisoner !

*Jac. Fos.* What voice is that ?—'Tis Barbarigo's ! Ah !  
Our House's foe, and one of my few judges. 80

*Bar.* To balance such a foe, if such there be,  
Thy father sits amongst thy judges.

*Jac. Fos.* True,  
He judges.

*Bar.* Then deem not the laws too harsh  
Which yield so much indulgence to a sire,  
As to allow his voice in such high matter  
As the state's safety——

*Jac. Fos.* And his son's. I'm faint ;  
Let me approach, I pray you, for a breath  
Of air, yon window which o'erlooks the waters.

i. — *much pity.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. ["This whole episode in the private life of the Foscari family is valuable chiefly for the light it throws upon the internal history of Venice. We are clearly in an atmosphere unknown before. The Council of Ten is all-powerful ; it even usurps functions which do not belong to it by the constitution. The air is charged with plots, suspicion, assassination, denunciation, spies,—all the paraphernalia which went to confirm the popular legend as to the terrible nature of the *Dieci*."]—*Venice, etc.*, by Horatio F. Brown, 1893, p. 305.]

*Enter an Officer, who whispers BARBARIGO.*

*Bar. (to the Guard).* Let him approach. I must not speak with him

Further than thus : I have transgressed my duty 90

In this brief parley, and must now redeem it<sup>i</sup>

Within the Council Chamber. [*Exit BARBARIGO.*

[*Guard conducting* JACOPO FOSCARI *to the window.*

*Guard.* There, sir, 'tis

Open.—How feel you?

*Jac. Fos.* Like a boy—Oh Venice !

*Guard.* And your limbs?

*Jac. Fos.* Limbs ! how often have they borne me<sup>1</sup>

Bounding o'er yon blue tide, as I have skimmed

The gondola along in childish race,

And, masqued as a young gondolier, amidst

My gay competitors, noble as I,

Raced for our pleasure, in the pride of strength ;

While the fair populace of crowding beauties, 100

Plebeian as patrician, cheered us on

With dazzling smiles, and wishes audible,

And waving kerchiefs, and applauding hands,

Even to the goal !—How many a time have I

Cloven with arm still lustier, breast more daring,

The wave all roughened ; with a swimmer's stroke

Flinging the billows back from my drenched hair,

And laughing from my lip the audacious brine,

Which kissed it like a wine-cup, rising o'er

The waves as they arose, and prouder still 110

The loftier they uplifted me ; and oft,

In wantonness of spirit, plunging down

Into their green and glassy gulfs, and making

My way to shells and sea-weed, all unseen

By those above, till they waxed fearful ; then

i. *In this brief colloquy, and must redeem it.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [Compare—

“And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward : from a boy  
I wontoned with thy breakers.”

*Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza clxxxiv. lines 1-4,  
*Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 461, note 2.]

Returning with my grasp full of such tokens  
As showed that I had searched the deep : exulting,  
With a far-dashing stroke, and, drawing deep  
The long-suspended breath, again I spurned  
The foam which broke around me, and pursued 120  
My track like a sea-bird.—I was a boy then.

*Guard.* Be a man now : there never was more need  
Of manhood's strength.

*Jac. Fos.* (*looking from the lattice*). My beautiful, my  
own,  
My only Venice—*this is breath!* Thy breeze,  
Thine Adrian sea-breeze, how it fans my face!  
Thy very winds feel native to my veins,  
And cool them into calmness! How unlike  
The hot gales of the horrid Cyclades,  
Which howled about my Candiote dungeon,<sup>1</sup> and  
Made my heart sick.

*Guard.* I see the colour comes 130  
Back to your cheek : Heaven send you strength to bear  
What more may be imposed !—I dread to think on't.

*Jac. Fos.* They will not banish me again?—No—no,  
Let them wring on ; I am strong yet.

*Guard.* Confess,  
And the rack will be spared you.

*Jac. Fos.* I confessed  
Once—twice before : both times they exiled me.

*Guard.* And the third time will slay you.

*Jac. Fos.* Let them do so,  
So I be buried in my birth-place : better  
Be ashes here than aught that lives elsewhere.

*Guard.* And can you so much love the soil which  
hates you? 140

*Jac. Fos.* The soil !—Oh no, it is the seed of the soil  
Which persecutes me : but my native earth  
Will take me as a mother to her arms.  
I ask no more than a Venetian grave,  
A dungeon, what they will, so it be here.

1. [The climate of Crete is genial and healthy ; but the town of Candia is exposed to winds from the north and north-west. Ulysses was driven into Crete by a northerly wind (*Od.* xix. 186), and St. Paul (*Acts* xxvii. 14) was driven by the same wind from the coast of Crete to Clauda.]

*Enter an Officer.*

*Offi.* Bring in the prisoner!

*Guard.* Signor, you hear the order.

*Jac. Fos.* Aye, I am used to such a summons; 'tis  
The third time they have tortured me:—then lend me  
Thine arm. [To the Guard.]

*Offi.* Take mine, sir; 'tis my duty to  
Be nearest to your person.

*Jac. Fos.* You!—you are he 150  
Who yesterday presided o'er my pangs—  
Away!—I'll walk alone.

*Offi.* As you please, Signor;  
The sentence was not of my signing, but  
I dared not disobey the Council when  
They——

*Jac. Fos.* Bade thee stretch me on their horrid engine.  
I pray thee touch me not—that is, just now;  
The time will come they will renew that order,  
But keep off from me till 'tis issued. As  
I look upon thy hands my curdling limbs  
Quiver with the anticipated wrenching, 160  
And the cold drops strain through my brow, as if——  
But onward—I have borne it—I can bear it.—  
How looks my father?

*Offi.* With his wonted aspect.

*Jac. Fos.* So does the earth, and sky, the blue of  
Ocean,  
The brightness of our city, and her domes,  
The mirth of her Piazza—even now  
Its merry hum of nations pierces here,  
Even here, into these chambers of the unknown  
Who govern, and the unknown and the unnumbered  
Judged and destroyed in silence,—all things wear 170  
The self-same aspect, to my very sire!  
Nothing can sympathise with Foscari,  
Not even a Foscari.—Sir, I attend you.

[*Exeunt* JACOPO FOSCARI, *Officer*, etc.]

*Enter MEMMO and another Senator.*

*Mem.* He's gone—we are too late:—think you “the Ten”

Will sit for any length of time to-day?

*Sen.* They say the prisoner is most obdurate,  
Persisting in his first avowal; but  
More I know not.

*Mem.* And that is much; the secrets  
Of yon terrific chamber are as hidden  
From us, the premier nobles of the state, 180  
As from the people.

*Sen.* Save the wonted rumours,  
Which—like the tales of spectres, that are rife  
Near ruined buildings—never have been proved,  
Nor wholly disbelieved: men know as little  
Of the state's real acts as of the grave's  
Unfathomed mysteries.

*Mem.* But with length of time  
We gain a step in knowledge, and I look  
Forward to be one day of the decemvirs.

*Sen.* Or Doge?

*Mem.* Why, no; not if I can avoid it.

*Sen.* 'Tis the first station of the state, and may 190  
Be lawfully desired, and lawfully  
Attained by noble aspirants.

*Mem.* To such  
I leave it; though born noble, my ambition  
Is limited: I'd rather be an unit  
Of an united and Imperial “Ten,”  
Than shine a lonely, though a gilded cipher.—  
Whom have we here? the wife of Foscari?

*Enter MARINA, with a female Attendant.*

*Mar.* What, no one?—I am wrong, there still are  
two;  
But they are senators.

*Mem.* Most noble lady,  
Command us.

*Mar.* I command!—Alas! my life 200  
Has been one long entreaty, and a vain one.

*Mem.* I understand thee, but I must not answer.

*Mar.* (*fiercely*). True—none dare answer here save on the rack,

Or question save those——

*Mem.* (*interrupting her*). High-born dame! <sup>1</sup> bethink thee

Where thou now art.

*Mar.* Where I now am!—It was  
My husband's father's palace.

*Mem.* The Duke's palace.

*Mar.* And his son's prison!—True, I have not forgot it;

And, if there were no other nearer, bitterer  
Remembrances, would thank the illustrious Memmo  
For pointing out the pleasures of the place. 210

*Mem.* Be calm!

*Mar.* (*looking up towards heaven*). I am; but oh, thou eternal God!

Canst *thou* continue so, with such a world?

*Mem.* Thy husband yet may be absolved.

*Mar.* He is,

In Heaven. I pray you, Signor Senator,  
Speak not of that; you are a man of office,  
So is the Doge; he has a son at stake  
Now, at this moment, and I have a husband,  
Or had; they are there within, or were at least  
An hour since, face to face, as judge and culprit:  
Will *he* condemn *him*?

*Mem.* I trust not.

1. ["She was a Contarini (her name was Lucrezia, not Marina)—

"A daughter of the house that now among  
Its ancestors in monumental brass  
Numbers eight Doges."

On the occasion of her marriage the Bùcentaur came out in its splendour; and a bridge of boats was thrown across the Canal Grande for the bridegroom and his retinue of three hundred horse."—*Foscari* by Samuel Rogers, *Poems*, 1852, ii. 93, *note*.

According to another footnote (*ibid.*, p. 90), "this story (*Foscari*) and the tragedy of the *Two Foscari* were published within a few days of each other, in November, 1821." The first edition of *Italy* was published anonymously in 1822. According to the announcement of a corrected and enlarged edition, which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, April 11, 1823, "a few copies of this poem were printed of the winter before last, while the author was abroad."]

*Mar.* But if  
He does not, there are those will sentence both. 220

*Mem.* They can.

*Mar.* And with them power and will are one  
In wickedness ;—my *husband* 's lost !

*Mem.* Not so ;  
Justice is judge in Venice.

*Mar.* If it were so,  
There now would be no Venice. But let it  
Live on, so the good die not, till the hour  
Of Nature's summons ; but "the Ten's" is quicker,  
And we must wait on't. Ah ! a voice of wail !  
[*A faint cry within.*]

*Sen.* Hark !

*Mem.* 'Twas a cry of—

*Mar.* No, no ; not my husband's—  
Not Foscari's.

*Mem.* The voice was—

*Mar.* Not his : no. 230  
He shriek ! No ; that should be his father's part,  
Not his—not his—he'll die in silence.  
[*A faint groan again within.*]

*Mem.* What !  
Again ?

*Mar.* His voice ! it seemed so : I will not  
Believe it. Should he shrink, I cannot cease  
To love ; but—no—no—no—it must have been  
A fearful pang, which wrung a groan from him.

*Sen.* And, feeling for thy husband's wrongs, wouldst  
thou  
Have him bear more than mortal pain in silence ?

*Mar.* We all must bear our tortures. I have not  
Left barren the great house of Foscari, 240  
Though they sweep both the Doge and son from life ;  
I have endured as much in giving life  
To those who will succeed them, as they can  
In leaving it : but mine were joyful pangs :  
And yet they wrung me till I *could* have shrieked,  
But did not ; for my hope was to bring forth  
Heroes, and would not welcome them with tears.

*Mem.* All 's silent now.



*Mar.* Perhaps all 's over ; but  
I will not deem it : he hath nerved himself,  
And now defies them.

*Enter an Officer hastily.*

*Mem.* How now, friend, what seek you ?

*Off.* A leech. The prisoner has fainted. [*Exit Officer.*]

*Mem.* Lady, 251

'Twere better to retire.

*Sen.* (*offering to assist her*). I pray thee do so.

*Mar.* Off! I will tend him.

*Mem.* You! Remember, lady!  
Ingress is given to none within those chambers  
Except "the Ten," and their familiars.

*Mar.* Well,  
I know that none who enter there return  
As they have entered—many never ; but  
They shall not balk my entrance.

*Mem.* Alas ! this  
Is but to expose yourself to harsh repulse,  
And worse suspense.

*Mar.* Who shall oppose me ?

*Mem.* They 260  
Whose duty 'tis to do so.

*Mar.* 'Tis *their* duty  
To trample on all human feelings, all  
Ties which bind man to man, to emulate  
The fiends who will one day requite them in  
Variety of torturing ! Yet I'll pass.

*Mem.* It is impossible.

*Mar.* That shall be tried.<sup>1</sup>  
Despair defies even despotism : there is  
That in my heart would make its way through hosts  
With levelled spears ; and think you a few jailors  
Shall put me from my path ? Give me, then, way ; 270  
This is the Doge's palace ; I am wife  
Of the Duke's son, the *innocent* Duke's son,  
And they shall hear this !

*Mem.* It will only serve

i. *Do not deem so.*—[*MS. M.*]

More to exasperate his judges.

*Mar.* What  
Are *judges* who give way to anger? they  
Who do so are assassins. Give me way. [*Exit MARINA.*]

*Sen.* Poor lady!

*Mem.* 'Tis mere desperation: she  
Will not be admitted o'er the threshold.

*Sen.* And  
Even if she be so, cannot save her husband.  
But, see, the officer returns.

[*The Officer passes over the stage with another person.*]

*Mem.* I hardly 280  
Thought that "the Ten" had even this touch of pity,  
Or would permit assistance to this sufferer.

*Sen.* Pity! Is't pity to recall to feeling  
The wretch too happy to escape to Death  
By the compassionate trance, poor Nature's last  
Resource against the tyranny of pain?

*Mem.* I marvel they condemn him not at once.

*Sen.* That 's not their policy: they'd have him live,  
Because he fears not death; and banish him,  
Because all earth, except his native land, 290  
To him is one wide prison, and each breath  
Of foreign air he draws seems a slow poison,  
Consuming but not killing.

*Mem.* Circumstance  
Confirms his crimes, but he avows them not.

*Sen.* None, save the Letter, which, he says, was written  
Addressed to Milan's duke, in the full knowledge  
That it would fall into the Senate's hands,  
And thus he should be re-conveyed to Venice.<sup>1</sup>

1. [Jacopo's plea, that the letter to the Duke of Milan was written for the express purpose of being recalled to Venice, is inadmissible for more reasons than one. In the first place, if on suspicion of a letter written but never sent, the Ten had thought fit to recall him, it by no means followed that they would have granted him an interview with his wife and family; and, secondly, the fact that there were letters in cypher found in his possession, and that a direct invitation to the Sultan to rescue him by force was among the impounded documents ("Quod requirebat dictum Teucrum ut mitteret ex galeis suis ad accipiendum et levandum eum de dicto loco"), proves that the appeal to the Duke of Milan was *bonâ fide*, and not a mere act of desperation. (See *The Two Doges*, pp. 101, 102, and Berlan's *I due Foscari*, p. 53, etc.)]

*Mem.* But as a culprit.

*Sen.* Yes, but to his country ;  
And that was all he sought,—so he avouches. 300

*Mem.* The accusation of the bribes was proved.

*Sen.* Not clearly, and the charge of homicide  
Has been annulled by the death-bed confession  
Of Nicolas Erizzo, who slew the late  
Chief of "the Ten."<sup>1</sup>

*Mem.* Then why not clear him ?

*Sen.* That  
They ought to answer ; for it is well known  
That Almorò Donato, as I said,  
Was slain by Erizzo for private vengeance.

*Mem.* There must be more in this strange process  
than  
The apparent crimes of the accused disclose— 310  
But here come two of "the Ten ;" let us retire.

[*Exeunt MEMMO and Senator.*]

*Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.*

*Bar.* (*addressing LOR.*). That were too much : believe  
me, 'twas not meet  
The trial should go further at this moment.

*Lor.* And so the Council must break up, and Justice  
Pause in her full career, because a woman  
Breaks in on our deliberations ?

*Bar.* No,  
That 's not the cause ; you saw the prisoner's state.

*Lor.* And had he not recovered ?

*Bar.* To relapse  
Upon the least renewal.

*Lor.* 'Twas not tried.

*Bar.* 'Tis vain to murmur ; the majority 320  
In council were against you.

*Lor.* Thanks to you, sir,

1. [There is no documentary evidence for this "confession," which rests on a mere tradition. (*Vide* Sanudo, *Vitæ Ducum Venetorum*, apud Muratori, *Rerum Ital. Script.*, 1733, xxii. col. 1139 ; see, too, Berlioz, *I due Foscari*, p. 37.) Moreover, Almorò Donato was not chief of the "Ten" at the date of his murder. The three "Capi" for November, 1450, were Ermolao Vallaresso, Giovanni Giustiniani, and Andrea Marcello (*vide ibid.*, p. 25).]

And the old ducal dotard, who combined  
The worthy voices which o'er-ruled my own.

*Bar.* I am a judge ; but must confess that part  
Of our stern duty, which prescribes the Question,<sup>1</sup>  
And bids us sit and see its sharp infliction,  
Makes me wish——

*Lor.* What?

*Bar.* That *you* would *sometimes* feel,  
As I do always.

*Lor.* Go to, you're a child,  
Infirm of feeling as of purpose, blown  
About by every breath, shook<sup>2</sup> by a sigh, 330  
And melted by a tear—a precious judge  
For Venice ! and a worthy statesman to  
Be partner in my policy.

*Bar.* He shed  
No tears.

*Lor.* He cried out twice.

*Bar.* A Saint had done so,  
Even with the crown of Glory in his eye,  
At such inhuman artifice of pain  
As was forced on him ; but he did not cry<sup>3</sup>  
For pity ; not a word nor groan escaped him,  
And those two shrieks were not in supplication,  
But wrung from pangs, and followed by no prayers. 340

*Lor.* He muttered many times between his teeth,  
But inarticulately.<sup>4</sup>

*Bar.* That I heard not :  
You stood more near him.

*Lor.* I did so.

1. *As was proved on him* ——.—[MS.M.]

1. ["Examination by torture : 'Such presumption is only sufficient to put the person to the rack or torture' (Ayliffe's *Parergon*)."]—*Cent. Dict.*, art. "Question."

2. [Shakespeare, Milton, Thompson, and others, use "shook" for "shaken."]

3. [The inarticulate mutterings are probably an echo of the "incantation and magic words" ("incantationem et verba quæ sibi reperta sunt de quibus ad funem utitur . . . quoniam in fune aliquam nec vocem nec gemitum emittit sed solum inter dentes ipse videtur et auditur loqui" [*Die beiden Foscari*, pp. 160, 161]), which, according to the decree of the Council of Ten, dated March 26, 1451, Jacopo let fall "while under torture" during his second trial.]

*Bar.* Methought,  
To my surprise too, you were touched with mercy,  
And were the first to call out for assistance  
When he was failing.

*Lor.* I believed that swoon  
His last.

*Bar.* And have I not oft heard thee name  
His and his father's death your nearest wish?

*Lor.* If he dies innocent, that is to say,  
With his guilt unavowed, he'll be lamented. 350

*Bar.* What, wouldst thou slay his memory?

*Lor.* Wouldst thou have  
His state descend to his children, as it must,  
If he die unattainted?

*Bar.* War with *them* too?

*Lor.* With all their house, till theirs or mine are  
nothing.

*Bar.* And the deep agony of his pale wife,  
And the repressed convulsion of the high  
And princely brow of his old father, which  
Broke forth in a slight shuddering, though rarely,  
Or in some clammy drops, soon wiped away  
In stern serenity; these moved you not? 360

[*Exit LOREDANO.*

He's silent in his hate, as Foscari  
Was in his suffering; and the poor wretch moved me  
More by his silence than a thousand outcries  
Could have effected. 'Twas a dreadful sight  
When his distracted wife broke through into  
The hall of our tribunal, and beheld  
What we could scarcely look upon, long used  
To such sights. I must think no more of this,  
Lest I forget in this compassion for  
Our foes, their former injuries, and lose 370  
The hold of vengeance Loredano plans  
For him and me; but mine would be content  
With lesser retribution than he thirsts for,  
And I would mitigate his deeper hatred  
To milder thoughts; but, for the present, Foscari  
Has a short hourly respite, granted at  
The instance of the elders of the Council,

Moved doubtless by his wife's appearance in  
 The hall, and his own sufferings.—Lo! they come :  
 How feeble and forlorn ! I cannot bear  
 To look on them again in this extremity :  
 I'll hence, and try to soften Loredano.<sup>1</sup>

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[*Exit BARBARIGO.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A hall in the DOGE's Palace.*

*The DOGE and a Senator.*

*Sen.* Is it your pleasure to sign the report  
 Now, or postpone it till to-morrow ?

*Doge.*

Now ;

I overlooked it yesterday : it wants  
 Merely the signature. Give me the pen—

[*The DOGE sits down and signs the paper.*]

There, Signor.

*Sen.* (*looking at the paper*). You have forgot ; it is not  
 signed.

*Doge.* Not signed ? Ah, I perceive my eyes begin  
 To wax more weak with age. I did not see  
 That I had dipped the pen without effect.<sup>1</sup>

*Sen.* (*dipping the pen into the ink, and placing the paper  
 before the DOGE*). Your hand, too, shakes, my

Lord : allow me, thus—

*Doge.* 'Tis done, I thank you.

*Sen.*

Thus the act confirmed  
 By you and by "the Ten" gives peace to Venice.

11

*Doge.* 'Tis long since she enjoyed it : may it be  
 As long ere she resume her arms !

*Sen.*

'Tis almost

Thirty-four years of nearly ceaseless warfare

i. *I'll hence and follow Loredano home.*—[*MS. M.*]

ii. *That I had dipped the pen too heedlessly.*—[*MS. M.*]

With the Turk, or the powers of Italy ;  
The state had need of some repose.

*Doge.* No doubt :  
I found her Queen of Ocean, and I leave her  
Lady of Lombardy ; it is a comfort <sup>1</sup>  
That I have added to her diadem  
The gems of Brescia and Ravenna ; Crema <sup>1</sup> 20  
And Bergamo no less are hers ; her realm  
By land has grown by thus much in my reign,  
While her sea-sway has not shrunk.

*Sen.* 'Tis most true,  
And merits all our country's gratitude.

*Doge.* Perhaps so.

*Sen.* Which should be made manifest.

*Doge.* I have not complained, sir.

*Sen.* My good Lord, forgive me.

*Doge.* For what?

*Sen.* My heart bleeds for you.

*Doge.* For me, Signor?

*Sen.* And for your——

*Doge.* Stop !

*Sen.* It must have way, my Lord :  
I have too many duties towards you  
And all your house, for past and present kindness, 30  
Not to feel deeply for your son.

*Doge.* Was this  
In your commission ?

*Sen.* What, my Lord ?

*Doge.* This prattle  
Of things you know not : but the treaty's signed ;  
Return with it to them who sent you.

*Sen.* I  
Obey. I had in charge, too, from the Council,  
That you would fix an hour for their reunion.

*Doge.* Say, when they will—now, even at this moment,

i. *Mistress of Lombardy*—'tis some comfort to me.—[MS. M.]

1. [Compare "Ce fut l'époque, où Vénise étendit son empire sur Brescia, Bergame, Ravenne, et Crème ; où elle fonda sa domination de Lombardie," etc. (Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques*, x. 38). Brescia fell to the Venetians, October, 1426 ; Bergamo, in April, 1428 ; Ravenna, in August, 1440 ; and Crema, in 1453.]









*The Lion of St. Mark*



If it so please them : I am the State's servant.

*Sen.* They would accord some time for your repose.

*Doge.* I have no repose, that is, none which shall cause  
The loss of an hour's time unto the State. 41

Let them meet when they will, I shall be found

Where I should be, and *what* I have been ever.

[*Exit Senator.* The DOGE remains in silence.

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Att.* Prince !

*Doge.* Say on.

*Att.* The illustrious lady Foscari  
Requests an audience.

*Doge.* Bid her enter. Poor  
Marina !

[*Exit Attendant.* The DOGE remains in silence as  
before.

*Enter MARINA.*

*Mar.* I have ventured, father, on  
Your privacy.

*Doge.* I have none from you, my child.  
Command my time, when not commanded by  
The State.

*Mar.* I wished to speak to you of *him*.

*Doge.* Your husband ?

*Mar.* And your son.

*Doge.* Proceed, my daughter !

*Mar.* I had obtained permission from "the Ten" 51  
To attend my husband for a limited number  
Of hours.

*Doge.* You had so.

*Mar.* 'Tis revoked.

*Doge.* By whom ?

*Mar.* "The Ten."—When we had reached "the  
Bridge of Sighs,"<sup>1</sup>

1. [The Bridge of Sighs was not built till the end of the sixteenth century. (*Vide ante, Marino Faliero*, act i. sc. 2, line 508, *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 363, note 2 ; see, too, *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza i. line 1, *et post*, act iv. sc. 1, line 75.)]

Which I prepared to pass with Foscari,  
The gloomy guardian of that passage first  
Demurred: a messenger was sent back to  
"The Ten;"—but as the Court no longer sate,  
And no permission had been given in writing,  
I was thrust back, with the assurance that  
Until that high tribunal reassembled  
The dungeon walls must still divide us. 60

*Doge.* True,  
The form has been omitted in the haste  
With which the court adjourned; and till it meets,  
'Tis dubious.

*Mar.* Till it meets! and when it meets,  
They'll torture him again; and he and I  
Must purchase by renewal of the rack  
The interview of husband and of wife,  
The holiest tie beneath the Heavens!—Oh God!  
Dost thou see this?

*Doge.* Child—child——

*Mar. (abruptly).* Call me not "child!"  
You soon will have no children—you deserve none— 71  
You, who can talk thus calmly of a son  
In circumstances which would call forth tears  
Of blood from Spartans! Though these did not weep  
Their boys who died in battle, is it written  
That they beheld them perish piecemeal, nor  
Stretched forth a hand to save them?

*Doge.* You behold me:  
I cannot weep—I would I could; but if  
Each white hair on this head were a young life,  
This ducal cap the Diadem of earth, 80  
This ducal ring with which I wed the waves  
A talisman to still them—I'd give all  
For him.

*Mar.* With less he surely might be saved.

*Doge.* That answer only shows you know not Venice.  
Alas! how should you? she knows not herself,  
In all her mystery. Hear me—they who aim  
At Foscari, aim no less at his father;  
The sire's destruction would not save the son;  
They work by different means to the same end,

And that is—but they have not conquered yet. 90

*Mar.* But they have crushed.

*Doge.* Nor crushed as yet—I live.

*Mar.* And your son,—how long will he live?

*Doge.* I trust,

For all that yet is past, as many years  
And happier than his father. The rash boy,  
With womanish impatience to return,  
Hath ruined all by that detected letter :  
A high crime, which I neither can deny  
Nor palliate, as parent or as Duke :  
Had he but borne a little, little longer  
His Candiote exile, I had hopes—he has quenched  
them— 100

He must return.

*Mar.* To exile?

*Doge.* I have said it.

*Mar.* And can I not go with him?

*Doge.* You well know

This prayer of yours was twice denied before  
By the assembled "Ten," and hardly now  
Will be accorded to a third request,  
Since aggravated errors on the part  
Of your Lord renders them still more austere.

*Mar.* Austere? Atrocious! The old human fiends,  
With one foot in the grave, with dim eyes, strange  
To tears save drops of dotage, with long white<sup>i</sup> 110  
And scanty hairs, and shaking hands, and heads  
As palsied as their hearts are hard, they counsel,  
Cabal, and put men's lives out, as if Life  
Were no more than the feelings long extinguished  
In their accursèd bosoms.

*Doge.* You know not—

*Mar.* I do—I do—and so should you, methinks—  
That these are demons: could it be else that  
Men, who have been of women born and suckled—  
Who have loved, or talked at least of Love—have given  
Their hands in sacred vows—have danced their babes 120  
Upon their knees, perhaps have mourned above them—  
In pain, in peril, or in death—who are,

i. To tears save those of dotage —.—[*MS. M.*]

Or were, at least in seeming, human, could  
Do as they have done by yours, and you yourself—  
*You*, who abet them?

*Doge.* I forgive this, for  
You know not what you say.

*Mar.* You know it well,  
And feel it nothing.

*Doge.* I have borne so much,  
That words have ceased to shake me.

*Mar.* Oh, no doubt!  
You have seen your son's blood flow, and your flesh  
shook not;

And after that, what are a woman's words? 130  
No more than woman's tears, that they should shake you.

*Doge.* Woman, this clamorous grief of thine, I tell thee,  
Is no more in the balance weighed with that  
Which—but I pity thee, my poor Marina!

*Mar.* Pity my husband, or I cast it from me;  
Pity thy son! *Thou* pity!—'tis a word  
Strange to thy heart—how came it on thy lips?

*Doge.* I must bear these reproaches, though they  
wrong me.  
Couldst thou but read——

*Mar.* 'Tis not upon thy brow,  
Nor in thine eyes, nor in thine acts,—where then 140  
Should I behold this sympathy? or shall?

*Doge* (*pointing downwards*). There.

*Mar.* In the earth?

*Doge.* To which I am tending: when  
It lies upon this heart, far lightlier, though  
Loaded with marble, than the thoughts which press it  
Now, you will know me better.

*Mar.* Are you, then,  
Indeed, thus to be pitied?

*Doge.* Pitied! None  
Shall ever use that base word, with which men  
Cloak their soul's hoarded triumph, as a fit one  
To mingle with my name; that name shall be,  
As far as *I* have borne it, what it was 150  
When I received it.

*Mar.* But for the poor children

Of him thou canst not, or thou wilt not save,  
You were the last to bear it.

*Doge.*

Would it were so !

Better for him he never had been born ;  
Better for me.—I have seen our house dishonoured.

*Mar.* That 's false ! A truer, nobler, trustier heart,  
More loving, or more loyal, never beat  
Within a human breast. I would not change  
My exiled, persecuted, mangled husband,  
Oppressed but not disgraced, crushed, overwhelmed, 160  
Alive, or dead, for Prince or Paladin  
In story or in fable, with a world  
To back his suit. Dishonoured !—*he* dishonoured !  
I tell thee, Doge, 'tis Venice is dishonoured ;  
His name shall be her foulest, worst reproach,  
For what he suffers, not for what he did.  
'Tis ye who are all traitors, Tyrant !—ye !  
Did you but love your Country like this victim  
Who totters back in chains to tortures, and  
Submits to all things rather than to exile, 170  
You'd fling yourselves before him, and implore  
His grace for your enormous guilt.

*Doge.*

He was

Indeed all you have said. I better bore  
The deaths of the two sons<sup>1</sup> Heaven took from me,  
Than Jacopo's disgrace.

*Mar.*

That word again ?

*Doge.* Has he not been condemned ?

*Mar.*

Is none but guilt so ?

*Doge.* Time may restore his memory—I would hope so.  
He was my pride, my—but 'tis useless now—  
I am not given to tears, but wept for joy  
When he was born : those drops were ominous. 180

*Mar.* I say he 's innocent ! And were he not so,  
Is our own blood and kin to shrink from us  
In fatal momer'ts ?

*Doge.*

I shrank not from him :

But I have other duties than a father's ;  
The state would not dispense me from those duties ;

1. [Five sons were born to the Doge, of whom four died of the plague (*Two Doges, etc.*, by A. Wiel, 1891, p. 77).]



Twice I demanded it, but was refused :<sup>1</sup>  
They must then be fulfilled.

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Att.* A message from  
"The Ten."  
*Doge.* Who bears it?  
*Att.* Noble Loredano.  
*Doge.* He !—but admit him. [*Exit Attendant.*  
*Mar.* Must I then retire?  
*Doge.* Perhaps it is not requisite, if this 190  
Concerns your husband, and if not—Well, Signor,  
[*To LOREDANO entering.*  
Your pleasure?  
*Lor.* I bear that of "the Ten."  
*Doge.* They  
Have chosen well their envoy.  
*Lor.* 'Tis *their* choice  
Which leads me here.  
*Doge.* It does their wisdom honour,  
And no less to their courtesies.—Proceed.  
*Lor.* We have decided.  
*Doge.* We?  
*Lor.* "The Ten" in council.  
*Doge.* What ! have they met again, and met without  
Apprising me?  
*Lor.* They wished to spare your feelings,  
No less than age.  
*Doge.* That's new—when spared they either?  
I thank them, notwithstanding.  
*Lor.* You know well 200  
That they have power to act at their discretion,  
With or without the presence of the Doge.  
*Doge.* 'Tis some years since I learned this, long before  
I became Doge, or dreamed of such advancement.  
You need not school me, Signor ; I sate in  
That Council when you were a young patrician.  
*Lor.* True, in my father's time ; I have heard him and

1. [The Doge offered to abdicate in June, 1433, in June, 1442, and again in 1446 (see Romanin, *Storia, etc.*, 1855, iv. 170, 171, note 1).]

The Admiral, his brother, say as much.  
Your Highness may remember them ; they both  
Died suddenly.<sup>1</sup>

*Doge.* And if they did so, better 210  
So die than live on lingeringly in pain.

*Lor.* No doubt : yet most men like to live their days  
out.

*Doge.* And did not they ?

*Lor.* The Grave knows best : they died,  
As I said, suddenly.

*Doge.* Is that so strange,  
That you repeat the word emphatically ?

*Lor.* So far from strange, that never was there death  
In my mind half so natural as theirs.  
Think *you* not so ?

*Doge.* What should I think of mortals ?

*Lor.* That they have mortal foes.

*Doge.* I understand you ;  
Your sires were mine, and you are heir in all things. 220  
*Lor.* You best know if I should be so.

*Doge.* I do.  
Your fathers were my foes, and I have heard  
Foul rumours were abroad ; I have also read  
Their epitaph, attributing their deaths  
To poison. 'Tis perhaps as true as most  
Inscriptions upon tombs, and yet no less  
A fable.

*Lor.* Who dares say so ?

*Doge.* I !——'Tis true  
Your fathers were mine enemies, as bitter  
As their son e'er can be, and I no less  
Was theirs ; but I was *openly* their foe : 230  
I never worked by plot in Council, nor  
Cabal in commonwealth, nor secret means  
Of practice against life by steel or drug.  
The proof is—your existence.

*Lor.* I fear not.

*Doge.* You have no cause, being what I am ; but  
were I  
That you would have me thought, you long ere now

1. [*Vide ante*, p. 123.]

Were past the sense of fear. Hate on ; I care not.

*Lor.* I never yet knew that a noble's life  
In Venice had to dread a Doge's frown,  
That is, by open means.

*Doge.* But I, good Signor, 240  
Am, or at least *was*, more than a mere duke,  
In blood, in mind, in means ; and that they know  
Who dreaded to elect me, and have since  
Striven all they dare to weigh me down : be sure,  
Before or since that period, had I held you  
At so much price as to require your absence,  
A word of mine had set such spirits to work  
As would have made you nothing. But in all things  
I have observed the strictest reverence ;  
Not for the laws alone, for those *you* have strained 250  
(I do not speak of *you* but as a single  
Voice of the many) somewhat beyond what  
I could enforce for my authority,  
Were I disposed to brawl ; but, as I said,  
I have observed with veneration, like  
A priest's for the High Altar, even unto  
The sacrifice of my own blood and quiet,  
Safety, and all save honour, the decrees,  
The health, the pride, and welfare of the State.  
And now, sir, to your business.

*Lor.* 'Tis decreed, 260  
That, without further repetition of  
The Question, or continuance of the trial,  
Which only tends to show how stubborn guilt is,  
("The Ten," dispensing with the stricter law  
Which still prescribes the Question till a full  
Confession, and the prisoner partly having  
Avowed his crime in not denying that  
The letter to the Duke of Milan 's his),  
James Foscari return to banishment,  
And sail in the same galley which conveyed him. 270

*Mar.* Thank God ! At least they will not drag him  
more  
Before that horrible tribunal. Would he  
But think so, to my mind the happiest doom,  
Not he alone, but all who dwell here, could

Desire, were to escape from such a land.

*Doge.* That is not a Venetian thought, my daughter.

*Mar.* No, 'twas too human. May I share his exile?

*Lor.* Of this "the Ten" said nothing.

*Mar.*

So I thought !

That were too human, also. But it was not  
Inhibited ?

*Lor.* It was not named.

*Mar. (to the Doge).*

Then, father,

280

Surely you can obtain or grant me thus much :

[*To LOREDANO.*

And you, sir, not oppose my prayer to be

Permitted to accompany my husband.

*Doge.* I will endeavour.

*Mar.*

And you, Signor?

*Lor.*

Lady !

'Tis not for me to anticipate the pleasure

Of the tribunal.

*Mar.*

Pleasure ! what a word

To use for the decrees of——

*Doge.*

Daughter, know you

In what a presence you pronounce these things ?

*Mar.* A Prince's and his subject's.

*Lor.*

Subject !

*Mar.*

Oh !

It galls you :—well, you are his equal, as

290

You think ; but that you are not, nor would be,

Were he a peasant :—well, then, you're a Prince,

A princely noble ; and what then am I ?

*Lor.* The offspring of a noble house.

*Mar.*

And wedded

To one as noble. What, or whose, then, is

The presence that should silence my free thoughts ?

*Lor.* The presence of your husband's Judges.

*Doge.*

And

The deference due even to the lightest word

That falls from those who rule in Venice.

*Mar.*

Keep

Those maxims for your mass of scared mechanics,

300

Your merchants, your Dalmatian and Greek slaves,

Your tributaries, your dumb citizens,

And masked nobility, your sbirri, and  
Your spies, your galley and your other slaves,  
To whom your midnight carryings off and drownings,  
Your dungeons next the palace roofs, or under  
The water's level;<sup>1</sup> your mysterious meetings,  
And unknown dooms, and sudden executions,  
Your "Bridge of Sighs," your strangling chamber, and  
Your torturing instruments, have made ye seem 310  
The beings of another and worse world!  
Keep such for them: I fear ye not. I know ye;<sup>i</sup>  
Have known and proved your worst, in the infernal  
Process of my poor husband! Treat me as  
Ye treated him:—you did so, in so dealing  
With him. Then what have I to fear *from* you,  
Even if I were of fearful nature, which  
I trust I am not?

*Doge.* You hear, she speaks wildly.

*Mar.* Not wisely, yet not wildly.

*Lor.* Lady! words  
Uttered within these walls I bear no further 320  
Than to the threshold, saving such as pass  
Between the Duke and me on the State's service.  
*Doge!* have you aught in answer?

*Doge.* Something from  
The Doge; it may be also from a parent.

*Lor.* My mission *here* is to the Doge.

*Doge.* Then say  
The Doge will choose his own ambassador,  
Or state in person what is meet; and for  
The father——

*Lor.* I remember *mine*.—Farewell!  
I kiss the hands of the illustrious Lady,  
And bow me to the Duke. [*Exit LOREDANO.*]

*Mar.* Are you content? 330

*Doge.* I am what you behold.

*Mar.* And that's a mystery.

*Doge.* All things are so to mortals; who can read them  
Save he who made? or, if they can, the few

i. *Keep this for them* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

1. [For the *Poszi* and *Piombi*, see *Marino Faliero*, act i. sc. 2, *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 363, note 2.]

And gifted spirits, who have studied long  
 That loathsome volume—man, and pored upon  
 Those black and bloody leaves, his heart and brain,<sup>i</sup>  
 But learn a magic which recoils upon  
 The adept who pursues it: all the sins  
 We find in others, Nature made our own;  
 All our advantages are those of Fortune;  
 Birth, wealth, health, beauty, are her accidents, 340  
 And when we cry out against Fate, 'twere well  
 We should remember Fortune can take nought  
 Save what she *gave*—the rest was nakedness,  
 And lusts, and appetites, and vanities,  
 The universal heritage, to battle  
 With as we may, and least in humblest stations,<sup>ii</sup>  
 Where Hunger swallows all in one low want,<sup>iii</sup>  
 And the original ordinance, that man  
 Must sweat for his poor pittance, keeps all passions 350  
 Aloof, save fear of famine! All is low,  
 And false, and hollow—clay from first to last,  
 The Prince's urn no less than potter's vessel.  
 Our Fame is in men's breath, our lives upon  
 Less than their breath; our durance upon days,<sup>iv</sup>  
 Our days on seasons; our whole being on  
 Something which is not *us*! <sup>1</sup>—So, we are slaves,  
 The greatest as the meanest—nothing rests  
 Upon our will; the will itself no less<sup>v</sup>  
 Depends upon a straw than on a storm; 360  
 And when we think we lead, we are most led,<sup>2</sup>

i. *The blackest leaf, his heart, and blankest, his brain.*—[MS. M.]

ii. — *and best in humblest stations.*—[MS. M.]

iii. *Where hunger swallows all—where ever was  
 The monarch who could bear a three days' fast?*—[MS. M.]

iv. *Their disposition* —. —[MS. M.]

v. — *the will itself dependent  
 Upon a storm, a straw, and both alike  
 Leading to death* —. —[MS. M.]

1. [It would seem that Byron's "not ourselves" by no means  
 "made for" righteousness.]

2. [Compare—

"The boldest steer but where their ports invite."

*Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza lxx. lines 7-9; and Canto IV. stanza  
 xxxiv., *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 260, 353, and 74, note 1.]

And still towards Death, a thing which comes as much  
Without our act or choice as birth, so that  
Methinks we must have sinned in some old world,  
And *this* is Hell: the best is, that it is not  
Eternal.

*Mar.* These are things we cannot judge  
On earth.

*Doge.* And how then shall we judge each other,  
Who are all earth, and I, who am called upon  
To judge my son? I have administered  
My country faithfully—victoriously—370  
I dare them to the proof, the *chart* of what  
She was and is: my reign has doubled realms;  
And, in reward, the gratitude of Venice  
Has left, or is about to leave, *me* single.

*Mar.* And Foscari? I do not think of such things,  
So I be left with him.

*Doge.* You shall be so;  
Thus much they cannot well deny.

*Mar.* And if  
They should, I will fly with him.

*Doge.* That can ne'er be.  
And whither would you fly?

*Mar.* I know not, reckon not—  
To Syria, Egypt, to the Ottoman—380  
Any where, where we might respire unfettered,  
And live nor girt by spies, nor liable  
To edicts of inquisitors of state.

*Doge.* What, wouldst thou have a renegade for  
husband,  
And turn him into traitor?

*Mar.* He is none!  
The Country is the traitress, which thrusts forth  
Her best and bravest from her. Tyranny  
Is far the worst of treasons. Dost thou deem  
None rebels except subjects? The Prince who  
Neglects or violates his trust is more  
A brigand than the robber-chief.390

*Doge.* I cannot  
Charge me with such a breach of faith.

*Mar.* No; thou

Observe'st, obey'st such laws as make old Draco's  
A code of mercy by comparison.

*Doge.* I found the law ; I did not make it. Were I  
A subject, still I might find parts and portions  
Fit for amendment ; but as Prince, I never  
Would change, for the sake of my house, the charter  
Left by our fathers.

*Mar.* Did they make it for  
The ruin of their children ?

*Doge.* Under such laws, Venice  
Has risen to what she is—a state to rival 401  
In deeds, and days, and sway, and, let me add,  
In glory (for we have had Roman spirits  
Amongst us), all that history has bequeathed  
Of Rome and Carthage in their best times, when  
The people swayed by Senates.

*Mar.* Rather say,  
Groaned under the stern Oligarchs.

*Doge.* Perhaps so ;  
But yet subdued the World : in such a state  
An individual, be he richest of  
Such rank as is permitted, or the meanest, 410  
Without a name, is alike nothing, when  
The policy, irrevocably tending  
To one great end, must be maintained in vigour.

*Mar.* This means that you are more a Doge than  
father.

*Doge.* It means, I am more citizen than either.  
If we had not for many centuries  
Had thousands of such citizens, and shall,  
I trust, have still such, Venice were no city.

*Mar.* Accurséd be the city where the laws  
Would stifle Nature's !

*Doge.* Had I as many sons 420  
As I have years, I would have given them all,  
Not without feeling, but I would have given them  
To the State's service, to fulfil her wishes,  
On the flood, in the field, or, if it must be,  
As it, alas ! has been, to ostracism,  
Exile, or chains, or whatsoever worse  
She might decree.



*Mar.* And this is Patriotism ?  
 To me it seems the worst barbarity.  
 Let me seek out my husband : the sage "Ten,"  
 With all its jealousy, will hardly war 430  
 So far with a weak woman as deny me  
 A moment's access to his dungeon.

*Doge.* I'll  
 So far take on myself, as order that  
 You may be admitted.

*Mar.* And what shall I say  
 To Foscari from his father ?

*Doge.* That he obey  
 The laws.

*Mar.* And nothing more ? Will you not see him  
 Ere he depart ? It may be the last time.

*Doge.* The last !—my boy !—the last time I shall see  
 My last of children ! Tell him I will come. [Exeunt.]

### ACT III.

#### SCENE I.—*The prison of* JACOPO FOSCARI.

*Jac. Fos. (solus).* No light, save yon faint gleam which  
 shows me walls  
 Which never echoed but to Sorrow's sounds,<sup>1</sup>  
 The sigh of long imprisonment, the step  
 Of feet on which the iron clanked the groan  
 Of Death, the imprecation of Despair !  
 And yet for this I have returned to Venice,  
 With some faint hope, 'tis true, that Time, which wears

1. [Compare—

"Our voices took a dreary tone,  
 An echo of the dungeon stone."

*Prisoner of Chillon*, lines 63, 64.

Compare, too—

"—— prisoned solitude.  
 And the Mind's canker in its savage mood,  
 When the impatient thirst of light and air  
 Parches the heart."

*Lament of Tasso*, lines 4-7.]

The marble down, had worn away the hate  
 Of men's hearts ; but I knew them not, and here  
 Must I consume my own, which never beat 10  
 For Venice but with such a yearning as  
 The dove has for her distant nest, when wheeling  
 High in the air on her return to greet  
 Her callow brood. What letters are these which

[*Approaching the wall.*

Are scrawled along the inexorable wall?  
 Will the gleam let me trace them? Ah! the names  
 Of my sad predecessors in this place,<sup>1</sup>  
 The dates of their despair, the brief words of  
 A grief too great for many. This stone page  
 Holds like an epitaph their history; 20  
 And the poor captive's tale is graven on  
 His dungeon barrier, like the lover's record  
 Upon the bark of some tall tree,<sup>2</sup> which bears  
 His own and his beloved's name. Alas!  
 I recognise some names familiar to me,  
 And blighted like to mine, which I will add,  
 Fittest for such a chronicle as this,  
 Which only can be read, as writ, by wretches.<sup>1</sup>

[*He engraves his name.*

*Enter a Familiar of "the Ten."*

*Fam.* I bring you food.

*Jac. Fos.* I pray you set it down;  
 I am past hunger: but my lips are parched— 30  
 The water!

*Fam.* There.

i. *Which never can be read but, as 'twas written,  
 By wretched beings.*—[*M.S.*]

1. [For inscriptions on the walls of the *Pozzi*, see note 1 to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto IV., *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 465-467. Hobhouse transferred these "scratchings" to his pocket-books, and thence to his *Historical Notes*; but even as prison inscriptions they lack both point and style.]

2. [Compare—

"Run, run, Orlando; carve on every tree  
 The fair, the chaste and unexpressive she."

*As You Like It*, act iii. sc. 2, lines 9, 10.]

*Jac. Fos. (after drinking).* I thank you : I am better.

*Fam.* I am commanded to inform you that  
Your further trial is postponed.

*Jac. Fos.* Till when?

*Fam.* I know not.—It is also in my orders  
That your illustrious lady be admitted.

*Jac. Fos.* Ah ! they relent, then—I had ceased to  
hope it :  
'Twas time.

*Enter MARINA.*

*Mar.* My best beloved !

*Jac. Fos. (embracing her).* My true wife,  
And only friend ! What happiness !

*Mar.* We'll part  
No more.

*Jac. Fos.* How ! would'st thou share a dungeon ?

*Mar.* Aye,  
The rack, the grave, all—any thing with thee, 40  
But the tomb last of all, for there we shall  
Be ignorant of each other, yet I will  
Share that—all things except new separation ;  
It is too much to have survived the first.  
How dost thou ? How are those worn limbs ? Alas !  
Why do I ask ? Thy paleness——

*Jac. Fos.* 'Tis the joy  
Of seeing thee again so soon, and so  
Without expectancy, has sent the blood  
Back to my heart, and left my cheeks like thine,  
For thou art pale too, my Marina !

*Mar.* 'Tis 50  
The gloom of this eternal cell, which never  
Knew sunbeam, and the sallow sullen glare  
Of the familiar's torch, which seems akin<sup>i</sup>  
To darkness more than light, by lending to  
The dungeon vapours its bituminous smoke,  
Which cloud whate'er we gaze on, even thine eyes—  
No, not thine eyes—they sparkle—how they sparkle !

i. *Of the familiar's torch, which seems to love  
Darkness far more than light.*—[MS.]

*Jac. Fos.* And thine !—but I am blinded by the torch.

*Mar.* As I had been without it. Couldst thou see here ?

*Jac. Fos.* Nothing at first ; but use and time had  
taught me 60

Familiarity with what was darkness ;  
And the grey twilight of such glimmerings as  
Glide through the crevices made by the winds  
Was kinder to mine eyes than the full Sun,  
When gorgeously o'ergilding any towers  
Save those of Venice ; but a moment ere  
Thou camest hither I was busy writing.

*Mar.* What ?

*Jac. Fos.* My name : look, 'tis there—recorded  
next

The name of him who here preceded me—  
If dungeon dates say true.

*Mar.* And what of him ? 70

*Jac. Fos.* These walls are silent of men's ends ; they  
only

Seem to hint shrewdly of them. Such stern walls  
Were never piled on high save o'er the dead,  
Or those who soon must be so.—*What of him ?*  
Thou askest.—What of me ? may soon be asked,  
With the like answer—doubt and dreadful surmise—  
Unless thou tell'st my tale.

*Mar.* *I speak of thee !*

*Jac. Fos.* And wherefore not ? All then shall speak  
of me :

The tyranny of silence is not lasting,  
And, though events be hidden, just men's groans 80  
Will burst all cerement, even a living grave's !  
I do not *doubt* my memory, but my life ;  
And neither do I fear.

*Mar.* Thy life is safe.

*Jac. Fos.* And liberty ?

*Mar.* The mind should make its own !

*Jac. Fos.* That has a noble sound ; but 'tis a sound,  
A music most impressive, but too transient :  
The Mind is much, but is not all. The Mind  
Hath nerved me to endure the risk of death,  
And torture positive, far worse than death

(If death be a deep sleep), without a groan, 90  
Or with a cry which rather shamed my judges  
Than me; but 'tis not all, for there are things  
More woful—such as this small dungeon, where  
I may breathe many years.

*Mar.* Alas! and this  
Small dungeon is all that belongs to thee  
Of this wide realm, of which thy sire is Prince.

*Jac. Fos.* That thought would scarcely aid me to  
endure it.

My doom is common; many are in dungeons,  
But none like mine, so near their father's palace;  
But then my heart is sometimes high, and hope 100  
Will stream along those moted rays of light  
Peopled with dusty atoms, which afford  
Our only day; for, save the gaoler's torch,  
And a strange firefly, which was quickly caught  
Last night in yon enormous spider's net,  
I ne'er saw aught here like a ray. Alas!  
I know if mind may bear us up, or no,  
For I have such, and shown it before men;  
It sinks in solitude: my soul is social.

*Mar.* I will be with thee.

*Jac. Fos.* Ah! if it were so! 110  
But *that* they never granted—nor will grant,  
And I shall be alone: no men; no books—  
Those lying likenesses of lying men.  
I asked for even those outlines of their kind,  
Which they term annals, history, what you will,  
Which men bequeath as portraits, and they were  
Refused me,—so these walls have been my study,  
More faithful pictures of Venetian story,  
With all their blank, or dismal stains, than is  
The Hall not far from hence, which bears on high 120  
Hundreds of Doges, and their deeds and dates.

*Mar.* I come to tell thee the result of their  
Last council on thy doom.

*Jac. Fos.* I know it—look!

[*He points to his limbs, as referring to the Question  
which he had undergone.*]

*Mar.* No—no—no more of that: even they relent

From that atrocity.

*Jac. Fos.* What then?

*Mar.* That you

Return to Candia.

*Jac. Fos.* Then my last hope's gone.  
I could endure my dungeon, for 'twas Venice;  
I could support the torture, there was something  
In my native air that buoyed my spirits up  
Like a ship on the Ocean tossed by storms,  
But proudly still bestriding<sup>1</sup> the high waves,  
And holding on its course; but *there*, afar,  
In that accurséd isle of slaves and captives,  
And unbelievers, like a stranded wreck,  
My very soul seemed mouldering in my bosom,  
And piecemeal I shall perish, if remanded.

130

*Mar.* And *here*?

*Jac. Fos.* At once—by better means, as briefer.<sup>1</sup>  
What! would they even deny me my Sire's sepulchre,  
As well as home and heritage?

*Mar.* My husband!  
I have sued to accompany thee hence,  
And not so hopelessly. This love of thine  
For an ungrateful and tyrannic soil  
Is Passion, and not Patriotism; for me,  
So I could see thee with a quiet aspect,  
And the sweet freedom of the earth and air,  
I would not cavil about climes or regions.  
This crowd of palaces and prisons is not  
A Paradise; its first inhabitants  
Were wretched exiles.

140

*Jac. Fos.* Well I know *how* wretched!

*Mar.* And yet you see how, from their banishment  
Before the Tartar into these salt isles,  
Their antique energy of mind, all that

150

i. *At once by briefer means and better.*—[MS.]

x. [Compare—

“Once more upon the waters! yet once more!  
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed  
That knows his rider.”

*Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza ii. lines 1-3,  
*Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 217, note 1.]

Remained of Rome for their inheritance,  
 Created by degrees an ocean Rome ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And shall an evil, which so often leads  
 To good, depress thee thus ?

*Jac. Fos.* Had I gone forth  
 From my own land, like the old patriarchs, seeking  
 Another region, with their flocks and herds ;  
 Had I been cast out like the Jews from Zion,  
 Or like our fathers, driven by Attila<sup>2</sup> 160  
 From fertile Italy, to barren islets,  
 I would have given some tears to my late country  
 And many thoughts ; but afterwards addressed  
 Myself, with those about me, to create  
 A new home and fresh state : perhaps I could  
 Have borne this—though I know not.

*Mar.* Wherefore not ?  
 It was the lot of millions, and must be  
 The fate of myriads more.

*Jac. Fos.* Aye—we but hear  
 Of the survivors' toil in their new lands,

1. In Lady Morgan's fearless and excellent work upon Italy, I perceive the expression of "Rome of the Ocean" applied to Venice. The same phrase occurs in the "Two Foscari." My publisher can vouch for me, that the tragedy was written and sent to England some time before I had seen Lady Morgan's work, which I only received on the 16th of August. I hasten, however, to notice the coincidence, and to yield the originality of the phrase to her who first placed it before the public.

[Byron calls Lady Morgan's *Italy* "fearless" on account of her strictures on the behaviour of Great Britain to Genoa in 1814. "England personally stood pledged to Genoa. . . . When the British officers rode into their gates bearing the white flag consecrated by the holy word of 'independence,' the people . . . 'kissed their garments.' . . . Every heart was open. . . . Lord William Bentinck's flag of 'Indipendenza' was taken down from the steeples and high places at sunrise ; before noon the arms of Sardinia blazoned in their stead ; and yet the Genoese did not rise *en masse* and massacre the English" (*Italy*, 1821, i. 245, 246). The passage which Byron feared might be quoted to his disparagement runs as follows : "As the bark glides on, as the shore recedes, and the city of waves, the Rome of the ocean, rises on the horizon, the spirits rally ; . . . and as the spires and cupolas of Venice come forth in the lustre of the mid-day sun, and its palaces, half-veiled in the ærial tints of distance, gradually assume their superb proportions, then the dream of many a youthful vigil is realized" (*ibid.*, ii. 449).]

2. [Compare *Marino Faliero*, act ii. sc. 2, line 110, *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 386, note 3.]

Their numbers and success; but who can number 170  
 The hearts which broke in silence at that parting,  
 Or after their departure; of that malady<sup>1</sup>  
 Which calls up green and native fields to view  
 From the rough deep, with such identity  
 To the poor exile's fevered eye, that he  
 Can scarcely be restrained from treading them?  
 That melody,<sup>2</sup> which out of tones and tunes<sup>1</sup>  
 Collects such pasture for the longing sorrow  
 Of the sad mountaineer, when far away  
 From his snow canopy of cliffs and clouds, 180  
 That he feeds on the sweet, but poisonous thought,  
 And dies.<sup>3</sup> You call this *weakness*! It is strength,  
 I say,—the parent of all honest feeling.  
 He who loves not his Country, can love nothing.

*Mar.* Obey her, then: 'tis she that puts thee forth.

i. *That malady, which* —.—[*MS. M.*]

1. The Calenture.—[From the Spanish *Calentura*, a fever peculiar to sailors within the tropics—

"So, by a calenture misled,  
 The mariner with rapture sees,  
 On the smooth ocean's azure bed,  
 Enamelled fields and verdant trees:  
 With eager haste he longs to rove  
 In that fantastic scene, and thinks  
 It must be some enchanted grove;  
 And in he leaps, and down he sinks."

Swift, *The South-Sea Project*, 1721, ed. 1824, xiv. 147.]

2. Alluding to the Swiss air and its effects.—[The *Ranz des Vaches*, played upon the bag-pipe by the young cowkeepers on the mountains:—"An air," says Rousseau, "so dear to the Swiss, that it was forbidden, under the pain of death, to play it to the troops, as it immediately drew tears from them, and made those who heard it desert, or die of what is called *la maladie du pays*, so ardent a desire did it excite to return to their country. It is in vain to seek in this air for energetic accents capable of producing such astonishing effects, for which strangers are unable to account from the music, which is in itself uncouth and wild. But it is from habit, recollections, and a thousand circumstances, retraced in this tune by those natives who hear it, and reminding them of their country, former pleasures of their youth, and all their ways of living, which occasion a bitter reflection at having lost them." Compare Byron's Swiss "Journal" for September 19, 1816, *Letters*, 1899, ii. 355.]

3. [Compare *Don Juan*, Canto XVI. stanza xlv. lines 6, 7—

"The calentures of music which o'ercome  
 The mountaineers with dreams that they are highlands."



*Jac. Fos.* Aye, there it is ; 'tis like a mother's curse  
Upon my soul—the mark is set upon me.  
The exiles you speak of went forth by nations,  
Their hands upheld each other by the way,  
Their tents were pitched together—I'm alone. 190

*Mar.* You shall be so no more—I will go with thee.

*Jac. Fos.* My best Marina !—and our children ?

*Mar.* They,

I fear, by the prevention of the state's  
Abhorrent policy, (which holds all ties  
As threads, which may be broken at her pleasure),  
Will not be suffered to proceed with us.

*Jac. Fos.* And canst thou leave them ?

*Mar.* Yes—with many a pang !

But—I *can* leave them, children as they are,  
To teach you to be less a child. From this  
Learn you to sway your feelings, when exacted 200  
By duties paramount ; and 'tis our first  
On earth to bear.

*Jac. Fos.* Have I not borne ?

*Mar.* Too much

From tyrannous injustice, and enough  
To teach you not to shrink now from a lot,  
Which, as compared with what you have undergone  
Of late, is mercy.

*Jac. Fos.* Ah ! you never yet

Were far away from Venice, never saw  
Her beautiful towers in the receding distance,  
While every furrow of the vessel's track  
Seemed ploughing deep into your heart ; you never 210  
Saw day go down upon your native spires<sup>i</sup>.  
So calmly with its gold and crimson glory,  
And after dreaming a disturbéd vision  
Of them and theirs, awoke and found them not.

*Mar.* I will divide this with you. Let us think  
Of our departure from this much-loved city,  
(Since you must *love* it, as it seems,) and this  
Chamber of state, her gratitude allots you.  
Our children will be cared for by the Doge,  
And by my uncles ; we must sail ere night. 220

i. — upon your native towers.—[MS. M.]

*Jac. Fos.* That 's sudden. Shall I not behold my father?

*Mar.* You will.

*Jac. Fos.* Where?

*Mar.* Here, or in the ducal chamber—

He said not which. I would that you could bear Your exile as he bears it.

*Jac. Fos.* Blame him not.

I sometimes murmur for a moment; but He could not now act otherwise. A show Of feeling or compassion on his part Would have but drawn upon his aged head Suspicion from "the Ten," and upon mine Accumulated ills.

*Mar.* Accumulated! 230

What pangs are those they have spared you?

*Jac. Fos.* That of leaving

Venice without beholding him or you,  
Which might have been forbidden now, as 'twas  
Upon my former exile.

*Mar.* That is true,

And thus far I am also the State's debtor,  
And shall be more so when I see us both  
Floating on the free waves—away—away—  
Be it to the earth's end, from this abhorred,  
Unjust, and——

*Jac. Fos.* Curse it not. If I am silent,  
Who dares accuse my Country?

*Mar.* Men and Angels! 240

The blood of myriads reeking up to Heaven,  
The groans of slaves in chains, and men in dungeons,  
Mothers, and wives, and sons, and sires, and subjects,  
Held in the bondage of ten bald-heads; and  
Though last, not least, *thy silence!* *Couldst thou say*  
*Aught in its favour, who would praise like thee?*

*Jac. Fos.* Let us address us then, since so it must be,  
To our departure. Who comes here?

*Enter LOREDANO attended by Familiars.*

*Lor. (to the Familiars).* Retire,  
But leave the torch. [*Exeunt the two Familiars.*]

*Jac. Fos.* Most welcome, noble Signor.  
I did not deem this poor place could have drawn 250  
Such presence hither.

*Lor.* 'Tis not the first time  
I have visited these places.

*Mar.* Nor would be  
The last, were all men's merits well rewarded.  
Came you here to insult us, or remain<sup>1</sup>  
As spy upon us, or as hostage for us?

*Lor.* Neither are of my office, noble Lady!  
I am sent hither to your husband, to  
Announce "the Ten's" decree.

*Mar.* That tenderness  
Has been anticipated: it is known.

*Lor.* As how?

*Mar.* I have informed him, not so gently, 260  
Doubtless, as your nice feelings would prescribe,  
The indulgence of your colleagues; but he knew it.  
If you come for our thanks, take them, and hence!  
The dungeon gloom is deep enough without you,  
And full of reptiles, not less loathsome, though  
Their sting is honester.

*Jac. Fos.* I pray you, calm you:  
What can avail such words?

*Mar.* To let him know  
That he is known.

*Lor.* Let the fair dame preserve  
Her sex's privilege.

*Mar.* I have some sons, sir,  
Will one day thank you better.

*Lor.* You do well 270  
To nurse them wisely. Foscari—you know  
Your sentence, then?

*Jac. Fos.* Return to Candia?

*Lor.* True—  
For life.

i. Come you here to insult us —.—[MS. M.]

*Jac. Fos.* Not long.

*Lor.* I said—for *life*.

*Jac. Fos.* And I  
Repeat—not long.

*Lor.* A year's imprisonment  
In Canea—afterwards the freedom of  
The whole isle.

*Jac. Fos.* Both the same to me: the after  
Freedom as is the first imprisonment.  
Is't true my wife accompanies me?

*Lor.* Yes,  
If she so wills it.

*Mar.* Who obtained that justice?

*Lor.* One who wars not with women.

*Mar.* But oppresses  
Men: howsoever let him have *my* thanks 281  
For the only boon I would have asked or taken  
From him or such as he is.

*Lor.* He receives them  
As they are offered.

*Mar.* May they thrive with him  
So much!—no more.

*Jac. Fos.* Is this, sir, your whole mission?  
Because we have brief time for preparation,  
And you perceive your presence doth disquiet  
This lady, of a house noble as yours.

*Mar.* Nobler!

*Lor.* How nobler?

*Mar.* As more generous!  
We say the "generous steed" to express the purity 290  
Of his high blood. Thus much I've learnt, although  
Venetian (who see few steeds save of bronze),<sup>1</sup>  
From those Venetians who have skirred<sup>2</sup> the coasts  
Of Egypt and her neighbour Araby:  
And why not say as soon the "*generous man*?"  
If race be aught, it is in qualities

1. [For "steeds of brass," compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xiii. line 1, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 338, and 336, note 1.]

2. [The first and all subsequent editions read "skimmed the coasts." Byron wrote "skirred," a word borrowed from Shakespeare. Compare *Siege of Corinth*, line 692, *Poetical Works*, 1800, iii. 480, note 4.]

More than in years ; and mine, which is as old  
As yours, is better in its product, nay—  
Look not so stern—but get you back, and pore  
Upon your genealogic tree's most green 300  
Of leaves and most mature of fruits, and there  
Blush to find ancestors, who would have blushed  
For such a son—thou cold inveterate hater !

*Jac. Fos.* Again, Marina !

*Mar.* Again ! *still*, Marina.

See you not, he comes here to glut his hate  
With a last look upon our misery ?  
Let him partake it !

*Jac. Fos.* That were difficult.

*Mar.* Nothing more easy. He partakes it now—  
Aye, he may veil beneath a marble brow  
And sneering lip the pang, but he partakes it. 310  
A few brief words of truth shame the Devil's servants  
No less than Master ; I have probed his soul  
A moment, as the Eternal Fire, ere long,  
Will reach it always. See how he shrinks from me !  
With death, and chains, and exile in his hand,  
To scatter o'er his kind as he thinks fit ;  
They are his weapons, not his armour, for  
I have pierced him to the core of his cold heart.  
I care not for his frowns ! We can but die,  
And he but live, for him the very worst 320  
Of destinies : each day secures him more  
His tempter's.

*Jac. Fos.* This is mere insanity.

*Mar.* It may be so ; and *who* hath made us *mad* ?

*Lor.* Let her go on ; it irks not me.

*Mar.* That 's false !

You came here to enjoy a heartless triumph  
Of cold looks upon manifold griefs ! You came  
To be sued to in vain—to mark our tears,  
And hoard our groans—to gaze upon the wreck  
Which you have made a Prince's son—my husband ;  
In short, to trample on the fallen—an office 330  
The hangman shrinks from, as all men from him !  
How have you sped ? We are wretched, Signor, as  
Your plots could make, and vengeance could desire us,

And how *feel* you ?

*Lor.* As rocks.

*Mar.* By thunder blasted :  
They feel not, but no less are shivered. Come,  
Foscari ; now let us go, and leave this felon,  
The sole fit habitant of such a cell,  
Which he has peopled often, but ne'er fitly  
Till he himself shall brood in it alone.

*Enter the DOGE.*

*Jac. Fos.* My father !

*Doge (embracing him).* Jacopo ! my son—my son ! 340

*Jac. Fos.* My father still ! How long it is since I  
Have heard thee name my name—*our* name !

*Doge.* My boy !  
Couldst thou but know——

*Jac. Fos.* I rarely, sir, have murmured.

*Doge.* I feel too much thou hast not.

*Mar.* Doge, look there !  
[*She points to LOREDANO.*

*Doge.* I see the man—what mean'st thou ?

*Mar.* Caution !

*Lor.* Being

The virtue which this noble lady most<sup>i</sup>

May practise, she doth well to recommend it.

*Mar.* Wretch ! 'tis no virtue, but the policy  
Of those who fain must deal perforce with vice :  
As such I recommend it, as I would 350  
To one whose foot was on an adder's path.

*Doge.* Daughter, it is superfluous ; I have long  
Known Loredano.

*Lor.* You may know him better.

*Mar.* Yes ; *worse* he could not.

*Jac. Fos.* Father, let not these  
Our parting hours be lost in listening to  
Reproaches, which boot nothing. Is it—is it,  
Indeed, our last of meetings ?

*Doge.* You behold  
These white hairs !

i. — *which this noble lady worst.*—[*MS. M.*]

*Jac. Fos.* And I feel, besides, that mine  
Will never be so white. Embrace me, father !  
I loved you ever—never more than now. 360  
Look to my children—to your last child's children :  
Let them be all to you which he was once,  
And never be to you what I am now.  
May I not see *them* also ?

*Mar.* No—not *here*.

*Jac. Fos.* They might behold their parent any where.

*Mar.* I would that they beheld their father in  
A place which would not mingle fear with love,  
To freeze their young blood in its natural current.  
They have fed well, slept soft, and knew not that  
Their sire was a mere hunted outlaw. Well, 370  
I know his fate may one day be their heritage,  
But let it only be their *heritage*,  
And not their present fee. Their senses, though  
Alive to love, are yet awake to terror ;  
And these vile damps, too, and yon *thick green wave*  
Which floats above the place where we now stand—  
A cell so far below the water's level,  
Sending its pestilence through every crevice,  
Might strike them : *this is not their* atmosphere,  
However you—and you—and most of all, 380  
As worthiest—you, sir, noble Loredano !  
May breathe it without prejudice.

*Jac. Fos.* I had not  
Reflected upon this, but acquiesce.

I shall depart, then, without meeting them ?

*Doge.* Not so : they shall await you in my chamber.

*Jac. Fos.* And must I leave them—all ?

*Lor.* You must.

*Jac. Fos.* Not one ?

*Lor.* They are the State's.

*Mar.* I thought they had been mine.

*Lor.* They are, in all maternal things.

*Mar.* That is,  
In all things painful. If they're sick, they will  
Be left to me to tend them ; should they die, 390  
To me to bury and to mourn ; but if  
They live, they'll make you soldiers, senators,

Slaves, exiles—what *you* will ; or if they are  
Females with portions, brides and *bribes* for nobles !  
Behold the State's care for its sons and mothers !

*Lor.* The hour approaches, and the wind is fair.

*Jac. Fos.* How know you that here, where the genial  
wind

Ne'er blows in all its blustering freedom ?

*Lor.* 'Twas so

When I came here. The galley floats within  
A bow-shot of the "Riva di Schiavoni."

400

*Jac. Fos.* Father ! I pray you to precede me, and  
Prepare my children to behold their father.

*Doge.* Be firm, my son !

*Jac. Fos.* I will do my endeavour.

*Mar.* Farewell ! at least to this detested dungeon,  
And him to whose good offices you owe  
In part your past imprisonment.

*Lor.*

And present

Liberation.

*Doge.* He speaks truth.

*Jac. Fos.* No doubt ! but 'tis

Exchange of chains for heavier chains I owe him.  
He knows this, or he had not sought to change them,  
But I reproach not.

*Lor.* The time narrows, Signor.

410

*Jac. Fos.* Alas ! I little thought so lingeringly  
To leave abodes like this : but when I feel  
That every step I take, even from this cell,  
Is one away from Venice, I look back  
Even on these dull damp walls, and——

*Doge.*

Boy ! no tears.

*Mar.* Let them flow on : he wept not on the rack  
To shame him, and they cannot shame him now.  
They will relieve his heart—that too kind heart—  
And I will find an hour to wipe away  
Those tears, or add my own. I could weep now, 420  
But would not gratify yon wretch so far.  
Let us proceed. Doge, lead the way.

*Lor. (to the Familiar).* The torch, there !

*Mar.* Yes, light us on, as to a funeral pyre,  
With Loredano mourning like an heir.



*Doge.* My son, you are feeble ; take this hand.

*Jac. Fos.*

Alas !

Must youth support itself on age, and I  
Who ought to be the prop of yours ?

*Lor.*

Take mine.

*Mar.* Touch it not, Foscari ; 'twill sting you. Signor,  
Stand off ! be sure, that if a grasp of yours  
Would raise us from the gulf wherein we are plunged, 430  
No hand of ours would stretch itself to meet it.  
Come, Foscari, take the hand the altar gave you ;  
It could not save, but will support you ever. [*Exeunt.*

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Ducal Palace.*

*Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.*

*Bar.* And have you confidence in such a project ?

*Lor.* I have.

*Bar.* 'Tis hard upon his years.

*Lor.*

Say rather

Kind to relieve him from the cares of State.

*Bar.* 'Twill break his heart.

*Lor.*

Age has no heart to break.

He has seen his son's half broken, and, except  
A start of feeling in his dungeon, never  
Swerved.

*Bar.* In his countenance, I grant you, never ;  
But I have seen him sometimes in a calm  
So desolate, that the most clamorous grief  
Had nought to envy him within. Where is he ? 10

*Lor.* In his own portion of the palace, with  
His son, and the whole race of Foscari.

*Bar.* Bidding farewell.

*Lor.*

A last ! as, soon, he shall

Bid to his Dukedom.

*Bar.*

When embarks the son ?

*Lor.* Forthwith—when this long leave is taken. 'Tis  
Time to admonish them again.

*Bar.* Forbear;  
Retrench not from their moments.

*Lor.* Not I, now  
We have higher business for our own. This day  
Shall be the last of the old Doge's reign,  
As the first of his son's last banishment, 20  
And that is vengeance.

*Bar.* In my mind, too deep.

*Lor.* 'Tis moderate—not even life for life, the rule  
Denounced of retribution from all time;  
They owe me still my father's and my uncle's.

*Bar.* Did not the Doge deny this strongly?

*Lor.* Doubtless.

*Bar.* And did not this shake your suspicion?

*Lor.* No.

*Bar.* But if this deposition should take place  
By our united influence in the Council,  
It must be done with all the deference  
Due to his years, his station, and his deeds. 30

*Lor.* As much of ceremony as you will,  
So that the thing be done. You may, for aught  
I care, depute the Council on their knees,  
(Like Barbarossa to the Pope,) to beg him  
To have the courtesy to abdicate.

*Bar.* What if he will not?

*Lor.* We'll elect another,  
And make him null.

*Bar.* But will the laws uphold us? <sup>1</sup>

*Lor.* What laws?—"The Ten" are laws; and if they  
were not,  
I will be legislator in this business.

*Bar.* At your own peril?

*Lor.* There is none, I tell you, 40  
Our powers are such.

*Bar.* But he has twice already  
Solicited permission to retire,  
And twice it was refused.

1. [According to the law, it rested with the six councillors of the Doge and a majority of the Grand Council to insist upon the abdication of a Doge. The action of the Ten was an usurpation of powers to which they were not entitled by the terms of the Constitution.]

*Lor.* The better reason  
To grant it the third time.  
*Bar.* Unasked ?  
*Lor.* It shows  
The impression of his former instances :  
If they were from his heart, he may be thankful :  
If not, 'twill punish his hypocrisy.  
Come, they are met by this time ; let us join them,  
And be *thou* fixed in purpose for this once.  
I have prepared such arguments as will not 50  
Fail to move them, and to remove him : since  
Their thoughts, their objects, have been sounded, do not  
*You*, with your wonted scruples, teach us pause,  
And all will prosper.

*Bar.* Could I but be certain  
This is no prelude to such persecution  
Of the sire as has fallen upon the son,  
I would support you.

*Lor.* He is safe, I tell you ;  
His fourscore years and five may linger on  
As long as he can drag them : 'tis his throne  
Alone is aimed at.

*Bar.* But discarded Princes 60  
Are seldom long of life.

*Lor.* And men of eighty  
More seldom still.

*Bar.* And why not wait these few years ?

*Lor.* Because we have waited long enough, and he  
Lived longer than enough. Hence ! in to council !  
[*Exeunt* LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.]

*Enter* MEMMO<sup>1</sup> and a Senator.

*Sen.* A summons to "the Ten !" why so ?

*Mem.* "The Ten "

1. [A touching incident is told concerning an interview between the Doge and Jacopo Memmo, head of the Forty. The Doge had just learnt (October 21, 1457) the decision of the Ten with regard to his abdication, and noticed that Memmo watched him attentively. "Foscari called to him, and, touching his hand, asked him whose son he was. He answered, 'I am the son of Messer Marin Memmo.'—"He is my dear friend," said the Doge; "tell him from me that it would be pleasing to me if he would come and see me, so that we might go at

Alone can answer ; they are rarely wont  
To let their thoughts anticipate their purpose  
By previous proclamation. We are summoned—  
That is enough.

*Sen.* For them, but not for us ;  
I would know why.

*Mem.* You will know why anon, 70  
If you obey : and, if not, you no less  
Will know why you should have obeyed.

*Sen.* I mean not  
To oppose them, *but*——

*Mem.* In Venice "*but*"'s a traitor.  
But me no "*buts*," unless you would pass o'er  
The Bridge which few repass.<sup>1</sup>

*Sen.* I am silent.

*Mem.* Why  
Thus hesitate ? "The Ten" have called in aid  
Of their deliberation five and twenty  
Patricians of the Senate—you are one,  
And I another ; and it seems to me  
Both honoured by the choice or chance which leads us 80  
To mingle with a body so august.

*Sen.* Most true. I say no more.

*Mem.* As we hope, Signor,  
And all may honestly, (that is, all those  
Of noble blood may,) one day hope to be  
Decemvir, it is surely for the Senate's<sup>1</sup>  
Chosen delegates, a school of wisdom, to  
Be thus admitted, though as novices,  
To view the mysteries.

*Sen.* Let us view them : they,  
No doubt, are worth it.

*Mem.* Being worth our lives  
If we divulge them, doubtless they are worth 90  
Something, at least to you or me.

*Sen.* I sought not  
A place within the sanctuary ; but being

i. *Decemvirs, it is surely* —.—[*MS. M.*]

our leisure in our boats to visit the monasteries' " (*The Two Doges*, by  
A. Weil, 1891, p. 124 ; see, too, Romanin, *Storia, etc.*, 1855, iv. 291).]  
1. [*Vide ante*, p. 139, note 1.]

Chosen, however reluctantly so chosen,  
I shall fulfil my office.

*Mem.* Let us not

Be latest in obeying "the Ten's" summons.

*Sen.* All are not met, but I am of your thought  
So far—let 's in.

*Mem.* The earliest are most welcome

In earnest councils—we will not be least so. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter the DOGE, JACOPO FOSCARI, and MARINA.*

*Jac. Fos.* Ah, father! though I must and will depart,  
Yet—yet—I pray you to obtain for me 100  
That I once more return unto my home,  
Howe'er remote the period. Let there be  
A point of time, as beacon to my heart,  
With any penalty annexed they please,  
But let me still return.

*Doge.* Son Jacopo,  
Go and obey our Country's will: 'tis not  
For us to look beyond.

*Jac. Fos.* But still I must  
Look back. I pray you think of me.

*Doge.* Alas!  
You ever were my dearest offspring, when  
They were more numerous, nor can be less so 110  
Now you are last; but did the State demand  
The exile of the disinterréd ashes  
Of your three goodly brothers, now in earth,<sup>2</sup>  
And their desponding shades came flitting round  
To impede the act, I must no less obey  
A duty, paramount to every duty.

*Mar.* My husband! let us on: this but prolongs

1. [Romanin (*Storia, etc.*, 1855, iv. 285, 286) quotes the following anecdote from the *Cronaca Dolfin* :—

"Alla commozione, alle lagrime, ai singulti che accompagnavano gli ultimi abbracciamenti, Jacopo più che mai sentendo il dolore di quel distacco, diceva: *Padre ve priego, procurè per mi, che ritorni a casa mia.* E messer lo doxe: *Jacomo va e obbedisci quel che vuol la terra e non cercar piu oltre.* Ma, uscito l'infelice figlio dalla stanza, più non resistendo alla piena degli affetti, si gettò piangendo sopra una sedia e lamentando diceva: *O pietà grande!*"

2. [*Vide ante*, act ii. sc. 1, line 174, p. 143, note 1.]

Our sorrow.

*Jac. Fos.* But we are not summoned yet ;  
The galley's sails are not unfurled :—who knows ?  
The wind may change.

*Mar.* And if it do, it will not 120  
Change *their* hearts, or your lot : the galley's oars  
Will quickly clear the harbour.

*Jac. Fos.* O, ye Elements !  
Where are your storms ?

*Mar.* In human breasts. Alas !  
Will nothing calm you ?

*Jac. Fos.* Never yet did mariner  
Put up to patron saint such prayers for prosperous  
And pleasant breezes, as I call upon you,  
Ye tutelary saints of my own city ! which  
Ye love not with more holy love than I,  
To lash up from the deep the Adrian waves,  
And waken Auster, sovereign of the Tempest ! 130  
Till the sea dash me back on my own shore  
A broken corse upon the barren Lido,  
Where I may mingle with the sands which skirt  
The land I love, and never shall see more !

*Mar.* And wish you this with *me* beside you ?

*Jac. Fos.* No— 140  
No—not for thee, too good, too kind ! May'st thou  
Live long to be a mother to those children  
Thy fond fidelity for a time deprives  
Of such support ! But for myself alone,  
May all the winds of Heaven howl down the Gulf, 140  
And tear the vessel, till the mariners,  
Appalled, turn their despairing eyes on me,  
As the Phenicians did on Jonah, then  
Cast me out from amongst them, as an offering  
To appease the waves. The billow which destroys me  
Will be more merciful than man, and bear me  
Dead, but *still* bear me to a native grave,  
From fishers' hands, upon the desolate strand,  
Which, of its thousand wrecks, hath ne'er received  
One lacerated like the heart which then 150  
Will be.—But wherefore breaks it not ? why live I ?

*Mar.* To man thyself, I trust, with time, to master

Such useless passion. Until now thou wert  
A sufferer, but not a loud one: why  
What is this to the things thou hast borne in silence—  
Imprisonment and actual torture?

*Jac. Fos.* Double,  
Triple, and tenfold torture! But you are right,  
It must be borne. Father, your blessing.  
*Doge.* Would

It could avail thee! but no less thou hast it.

*Jac. Fos.* Forgive—

*Doge.* What?

*Jac. Fos.* My poor mother, for my birth,  
And me for having lived, and you yourself 161  
(As I forgive you), for the gift of life,  
Which you bestowed upon me as my sire.

*Mar.* What hast thou done?

*Jac. Fos.* Nothing. I cannot charge  
My memory with much save sorrow: but  
I have been so beyond the common lot  
Chastened and visited, I needs must think  
That I was wicked. If it be so, may  
What I have undergone here keep me from  
A like hereafter!

*Mar.* Fear not: *that's* reserved 170  
For your oppressors.

*Jac. Fos.* Let me hope not.

*Mar.* Hope not?

*Jac. Fos.* I cannot wish them *all* they have inflicted.

*Mar. All!* the consummate fiends! A thousandfold  
May the worm which never dieth feed upon them!

*Jac. Fos.* They may repent.

*Mar.* And if they do, Heaven will not  
Accept the tardy penitence of demons.

*Enter an Officer and Guards.*

*Off.* Signor! the boat is at the shore—the wind  
Is rising—we are ready to attend you.

*Jac. Fos.* And I to be attended. Once more, father,  
Your hand!

*Doge.* Take it. Alas! how thine own trembles! 180

*Jac. Fos.* No—you mistake; 'tis yours that shakes, my father.

Farewell!

*Doge.* Farewell! Is there aught else?

*Jac. Fos.* No—nothing.  
[*To the Officer.*

Lend me your arm, good Signor.

*Offi.* You turn pale—

Let me support you—paler—ho! some aid there!

Some water!

*Mar.* Ah, he is dying!

*Jac. Fos.* Now, I'm ready—  
My eyes swim strangely—where 's the door?

*Mar.* Away!

Let me support him—my best love! Oh, God!

How faintly beats this heart—this pulse!

*Jac. Fos.* The light!  
*Is it the light?—I am faint.*

[*Officer presents him with water.*

*Offi.* He will be better,

Perhaps, in the air.

*Jac. Fos.* I doubt not. Father—wife— 190  
Your hands!

*Mar.* There 's death in that damp, clammy grasp.<sup>1</sup>  
Oh, God!—My Foscari, how fare you?

*Jac. Fos.* Well! [*He dies.*

*Offi.* He 's gone!

*Doge.* He 's free.

*Mar.* No—no, he is not dead;  
There must be life yet in that heart—he could not<sup>4</sup>  
Thus leave me.

*Doge.* Daughter!

*Mar.* Hold thy peace, old man!

i. — *he would not*  
*Thus leave me.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [So, too, Coleridge of Keats: "There is death in that hand;" and of Adam Steinmetz: "Alas! there is *death* in that dear hand." See *Table Talk* for August 14, 1832, and *Letter to John Peirse Kennard*, August 13, 1832, *Letters of S. T. C.*, 1895, ii. 764. Jacopo Foscari was sent back to exile in Crete, and did not die till February, 1457. His death at Venice, immediately after his sentence, is contrived for the sake of observing "the unities."] ]



n no daughter now—thou hast no son.

, Foscari!

*Off.* We must remove the body.

*Mar.* Touch it not, dungeon miscreants! your base office

is with his life, and goes not beyond murder,  
 on by your murderous laws. Leave his remains 200  
 those who know to honour them.

*Off.* I must

form the Signory, and learn their pleasure.

*Doge.* Inform the Signory from *me*, the Doge,  
 they have no further power upon those ashes :  
 while he lived, he was theirs, as fits a subject—  
 now he is *mine*—my broken-hearted boy! [*Exit Officer.*]

*Mar.* And I must live!

*Doge.* Your children live, Marina.

*Mar.* My children! true—they live, and I must live  
 bring them up to serve the State, and die  
 like their father. Oh! what best of blessings 210  
 the barrenness in Venice! Would my mother  
 have been so!

*Doge.* My unhappy children!

*Mar.* What!

feel it then at last—you!—Where is now  
 the Stoic of the State?

*Doge* (*throwing himself down by the body*). *Here!*

*Mar.* Aye, weep on!

ought you had no tears—you hoarded them  
 while they are useless; but weep on! he never  
 will weep more—never, never more.

*Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.*

*Bar.* What's here?

*Mar.* Ah! the Devil come to insult the dead! Avaunt  
 ungrateful Lucifer! 'tis holy ground.

Martyr's ashes now lie there, which make it 220  
 mine. Get thee back to thy place of torment!

*Mar.* Lady, we knew not of this sad event,  
 we passed here merely on our path from council.

*Mar.* Pass on.

*Lor.* We sought the Doge.

*Mar.* (*pointing to the Doge, who is still on the ground by his son's body*). He's busy, look,

About the business *you* provided for him.

Are ye content?

*Bar.* We will not interrupt

A parent's sorrows.

*Mar.* No, ye only make them,

Then leave them.

*Doge* (*rising*). Sirs, I am ready.

*Bar.* No—not now.

*Lor.* Yet 'twas important.

*Doge.* If 'twas so, I can

Only repeat—I am ready.

*Bar.* It shall not be 230

Just now, though Venice tottered o'er the deep

Like a frail vessel. I respect your griefs.

*Doge.* I thank you. If the tidings which you bring

Are evil, you may say them; nothing further

Can touch me more than him thou look'st on there;

If they be good, say on; you need not *fear*

That they can *comfort* me.

*Bar.* I would they could!

*Doge.* I spoke not to *you*, but to Loredano.

*He* understands me.

*Mar.* Ah! I thought it would be so.

*Doge.* What mean you?

*Mar.* Lo! there is the blood beginning 240

To flow through the dead lips of Foscari—

The body bleeds in presence of the assassin.

[*To LOREDANO.*

Thou cowardly murderer by law, behold

How Death itself bears witness to thy deeds!

*Doge.* My child! this is a phantasy of grief.

Bear hence the body. [*To his attendants.*] Signors, if

it please you,

Within an hour I'll hear you.

[*Exeunt DOGE, MARINA, and attendants with the body. Manent LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.*

*Bar.* He must not

Be troubled now.

*Lor.* He said himself that nought  
Could give him trouble farther.

*Bar.* These are words ;  
But Grief is lonely, and the breaking in 250  
Upon it barbarous.

*Lor.* Sorrow preys upon  
Its solitude, and nothing more diverts it  
From its sad visions of the other world,  
Than calling it at moments back to this.  
The busy have no time for tears.

*Bar.* And therefore  
You would deprive this old man of all business ?

*Lor.* The thing 's decreed. The Giunta<sup>1</sup> and "the  
Ten"  
Have made it law—who shall oppose that law ?

*Bar.* Humanity !

*Lor.* Because his son is dead ?

*Bar.* And yet unburied.

*Lor.* Had we known this when 260  
The act was passing, it might have suspended  
Its passage, but impedes it not—once passed.

*Bar.* I'll not consent.

*Lor.* You have consented to  
All that 's essential—leave the rest to me.

*Bar.* Why press his abdication now ?

*Lor.* The feelings  
Of private passion may not interrupt  
The public benefit ; and what the State  
Decides to-day must not give way before  
To-morrow for a natural accident.

*Bar.* You have a son.

*Lor.* I *have*—and *had* a father. 270

*Bar.* Still so inexorable ?

*Lor.* Still.

*Bar.* But let him  
Inter his son before we press upon him

1. [It is to be noted that the "Giunta" was demanded by Loredano himself—a proof of his *bona fides*, as the addition of twenty-five nobles to the original Ten would add to the chance of opposition on the part of the supporters and champions of the Doge (see *The Two Doges*, p. 116, and Romanin, *Storia*, etc., iv. 286, note 3).]

This edict.

*Lor.* Let him call up into life  
My sire and uncle—I consent. Men may,  
Even agéd men, be, or appear to be,  
Sires of a hundred sons, but cannot kindle  
An atom of their ancestors from earth.  
The victims are not equal ; he has seen  
His sons expire by natural deaths, and I  
My sires by violent and mysterious maladies. 280  
I used no poison, bribed no subtle master  
Of the destructive art of healing, to  
Shorten the path to the eternal cure.  
His sons—and he had four—are dead, without  
My dabbling in vile drugs.

*Bar.* And art thou sure  
He dealt in such ?

*Lor.* Most sure.

*Bar.* And yet he seems  
All openness.

*Lor.* And so he seemed not long  
Ago to Carmagnuola.

*Bar.* The attainted  
And foreign traitor ?

*Lor.* Even so : when *he*,  
After the very night in which “ the Ten ” 290  
(Joined with the Doge) decided his destruction,  
Met the great Duke at daybreak with a jest,  
Demanding whether he should augur him  
“ The good day or good night ? ” his Doge-ship answered,  
“ That he in truth had passed a night of vigil,  
“ In which ” (he added with a gracious smile)  
“ There often has been question about you.”<sup>1</sup>  
’Twas true ; the question was the death resolved  
Of Carmagnuola, eight months ere he died ;  
And the old Doge, who knew him doomed, smiled on  
him 300

x. An historical fact. See DARU [1821], tom. ii. [pp. 398, 399. Daru quotes as his authorities Sabellicus and Pietro Giustiniani. As a matter of fact, the Doge did his utmost to save Carmagnola, pleading that his sentence should be commuted to imprisonment for life (see *The Two Doges*, p. 66; and Romanin, *Storia*, etc., iv. 161).]

With deadly cozenage, eight long months beforehand—  
Eight months of such hypocrisy as is  
Learnt but in eighty years. Brave Carmagnuola  
Is dead; so is young Foscari and his brethren—  
I never *smiled* on *them*.

*Bar.* Was Carmagnuola  
Your friend?

*Lor.* He was the safeguard of the city.  
In early life its foe, but in his manhood,  
Its saviour first, then victim.

*Bar.* Ah! that seems  
The penalty of saving cities. He  
Whom we now act against not only saved  
Our own, but added others to her sway. 310

*Lor.* The Romans (and we ape them) gave a crown  
To him who took a city: and they gave  
A crown to him who saved a citizen  
In battle: the rewards are equal. Now,  
If we should measure forth the cities taken  
By the Doge Foscari, with citizens  
Destroyed by him, or *through* him, the account  
Were fearfully against him, although narrowed  
To private havoc, such as between him 320  
And my dead father.

*Bar.* Are you then thus fixed?

*Lor.* Why, what should change me?

*Bar.* That which changes me.  
But you, I know, are marble to retain  
A feud. But when all is accomplished, when  
The old man is deposed, his name degraded,  
His sons all dead, his family depressed,  
And you and yours triumphant, shall you sleep?

*Lor.* More soundly.

*Bar.* That's an error, and you'll find it  
Ere you sleep with your fathers.

*Lor.* They sleep not  
In their accelerated graves, nor will 330  
Till Foscari fills his. Each night I see them  
Stalk frowning round my couch, and, pointing towards  
The ducal palace, marshal me to vengeance.

*Bar.* Fancy's distemperature! There is no passion

More spectral or fantastical than Hate,  
Not even its opposite, Love, so peoples air  
With phantoms, as this madness of the heart.

*Enter an Officer.*

*Lor.* Where go you, sirrah?

*Offi.* By the ducal order  
To forward the preparatory rites  
For the late Foscari's interment.

*Bar.* Their 340  
Vault has been often opened of late years.

*Lor.* 'Twill be full soon, and may be closed for ever!

*Offi.* May I pass on?

*Lor.* You may.

*Bar.* How bears the Doge  
This last calamity?

*Offi.* With desperate firmness.  
In presence of another he says little,  
But I perceive his lips move now and then;  
And once or twice I heard him, from the adjoining  
Apartment, mutter forth the words—"My son!"  
Scarce audibly. I must proceed. [*Exit Officer.*]

*Bar.* This stroke  
Will move all Venice in his favour.

*Lor.* Right! 350  
We must be speedy: let us call together  
The delegates appointed to convey  
The Council's resolution.

*Bar.* I protest  
Against it at this moment.

*Lor.* As you please—  
I'll take their voices on it ne'ertheless,  
And see whose most may sway them, yours or mine.

[*Exeunt BARBARIGO and LOREDANO*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The DOGE's Apartment.**The DOGE and Attendants.*

*Att.* My Lord, the deputation is in waiting ;  
But add, that if another hour would better  
Accord with your will, they will make it theirs.

*Doge.* To me all hours are like. Let them approach.  
[*Exit Attendant.*]

*An Officer.* Prince ! I have done your bidding.

*Doge.* What command ?

*Offi.* A melancholy one—to call the attendance  
Of—

*Doge.* True—true—true : I crave your pardon. I  
Begin to fail in apprehension, and  
Wax very old—old almost as my years.  
Till now I fought them off, but they begin  
To overtake me. 10

*Enter the Deputation, consisting of six of the Signory  
and the Chief of the Ten.*

Noble men, your pleasure !

*Chief of the Ten.* In the first place, the Council doth  
condole  
With the Doge on his late and private grief.

*Doge.* No more—no more of that.

*Chief of the Ten.* Will not the Duke  
Accept the homage of respect ?

*Doge.* I do  
Accept it as 'tis given—proceed.

*Chief of the Ten.* “The Ten,”  
With a selected giunta from the Senate  
Of twenty-five of the best born patricians,  
Having deliberated on the state  
Of the Republic, and the o'erwhelming cares  
Which, at this moment, doubly must oppress  
Your years, so long devoted to your Country, 20

Have judged it fitting, with all reverence,  
Now to solicit from your wisdom (which  
Upon reflection must accord in this),  
The resignation of the ducal ring,  
Which you have worn so long and venerably :  
And to prove that they are not ungrateful, nor  
Cold to your years and services, they add  
An appanage of twenty hundred golden 30  
Ducats, to make retirement not less splendid  
Than should become a Sovereign's retreat.

*Doge.* Did I hear rightly ?

*Chief of the Ten.* Need I say again ?

*Doge.* No.—Have you done ?

*Chief of the Ten.* I have spoken. Twenty four <sup>1</sup>  
Hours are accorded you to give an answer.

*Doge.* I shall not need so many seconds.

*Chief of the Ten.* We  
Will now retire.

*Doge.* Stay ! four and twenty hours  
Will alter nothing which I have to say.

*Chief of the Ten.* Speak !

*Doge.* When I twice before reiterated  
My wish to abdicate, it was refused me : 40  
And not alone refused, but ye exacted  
An oath from me that I would never more  
Renew this instance. I have sworn to die  
In full exertion of the functions, which  
My Country called me here to exercise,  
According to my honour and my conscience—  
I cannot break *my* oath.

*Chief of the Ten.* Reduce us not  
To the alternative of a decree,  
Instead of your compliance.

*Doge.* Providence  
Prolongs my days to prove and chasten me ; 50  
But ye have no right to reproach my length

1. [By the terms of the "parte," or act of deposition drawn up by the Ten, October 21, 1457, the time granted for deliberation was "till the third hour of the following day." This limitation as to time was designed to prevent the Doge from summoning the Grand Council, "to whom alone belonged the right of releasing him from the dukedom" (*The Two Doges*, p. 118; *Die beiden Foscari*, 1878, pp. 174-176).]



Of days, since every hour has been the Country's.  
I am ready to lay down my life for her,  
As I have laid down dearer things than life :  
But for my dignity—I hold it of  
The *whole* Republic : when the *general* will  
Is manifest, then you shall all be answered.

*Chief of the Ten.* We grieve for such an answer ; but  
it cannot

Avail you aught.

*Doge.* I can submit to all things,  
But nothing will advance ; no, not a moment. 60  
What you decree—decree.

*Chief of the Ten.* With this, then, must we  
Return to those who sent us ?

*Doge.* You have heard me.

*Chief of the Ten.* With all due reverence we retire.  
[*Exeunt the Deputation, etc.*]

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Att.* My Lord,  
The noble dame Marina craves an audience.  
*Doge.* My time is hers.

*Enter MARINA.*

*Mar.* My Lord, if I intrude—  
Perhaps you fain would be alone ?

*Doge.* Alone !  
Alone, come all the world around me, I  
Am now and evermore. But we will bear it.

*Mar.* We will, and for the sake of those who are,  
Endeavour—Oh, my husband !

*Doge.* Give it way : 70  
I cannot comfort thee.

*Mar.* He might have lived,  
So formed for gentle privacy of life,  
So loving, so beloved ; the native of  
Another land, and who so blest and blessing  
As my poor Foscari ? Nothing was wanting  
Unto his happiness and mine save not  
To be Venetian.

*Doge.* Or a Prince's son.

*Mar.* Yes ; all things which conduce to other men's  
Imperfect happiness or high ambition,  
By some strange destiny, to him proved deadly. 80  
The Country and the People whom he loved,  
The Prince of whom he was the elder born,  
And——

*Doge.* Soon may be a Prince no longer.

*Mar.* How ?

*Doge.* They have taken my son from me, and now aim  
At my too long worn diadem and ring.  
Let them resume the gewgaws !

*Mar.* Oh, the tyrants !  
In such an hour too !

*Doge.* 'Tis the fittest time ;  
An hour ago I should have felt it.

*Mar.* And  
Will you not now resent it ?—Oh, for vengeance !  
But he, who, had he been enough protected, 90  
Might have repaid protection in this moment,  
Cannot assist his father.

*Doge.* Nor should do so  
Against his Country, had he a thousand lives  
Instead of that——

*Mar.* They tortured from him. This  
May be pure patriotism. I am a woman :  
To me my husband and my children were  
Country and home. I loved *him*—how I loved him !  
I have seen him pass through such an ordeal as  
The old martyrs would have shrunk from : he is gone,  
And I, who would have given my blood for him, 100  
Have nought to give but tears ! But could I compass  
The retribution of his wrongs !—Well, well !  
I have sons, who shall be men.

*Doge.* Your grief distracts you.

*Mar.* I thought I could have borne it, when I saw him  
Bowed down by such oppression ; yes, I thought  
That I would rather look upon his corse  
Than his prolonged captivity :—I am punished  
For that thought now. Would I were in his grave !

*Doge.* I must look on him once more.

*Mar.* Come with me !

*Doge.* Is he——

*Mar.* Our bridal bed is now his bier. 110

*Doge.* And he is in his shroud !

*Mar.* Come, come, old man !

[*Exeunt the DOGE and MARINA.*]

*Enter BARBARIGO and LOREDANO.*

*Bar. (to an Attendant).* Where is the Doge ?

*Att.* This instant retired hence,  
With the illustrious lady his son's widow.

*Lor.* Where ?

*Att.* To the chamber where the body lies.

*Bar.* Let us return, then.

*Lor.* You forget, you cannot.  
We have the implicit order of the Giunta  
To await their coming here, and join them in  
Their office : they'll be here soon after us.

*Bar.* And will they press their answer on the Doge ?

*Lor.* 'Twas his own wish that all should be done  
promptly. 120

He answered quickly, and must so be answered ;  
His dignity is looked to, his estate  
Cared for—what would he more ?

*Bar.* Die in his robes :  
He could not have lived long ; but I have done  
My best to save his honours, and opposed  
This proposition to the last, though vainly.  
Why would the general vote compel me hither ?

*Lor.* 'Twas fit that some one of such different thoughts  
From ours should be a witness, lest false tongues  
Should whisper that a harsh majority  
Dreaded to have its acts beheld by others. 130

*Bar.* And not less, I must needs think, for the sake  
Of humbling me for my vain opposition.  
You are ingenious, Loredano, in  
Your modes of vengeance, nay, poetical,  
A very Ovid in the art of *hating* ;  
'Tis thus (although a secondary object,  
Yet hate has microscopic eyes), to you

I owe, by way of foil to the more zealous,  
This undesired association in  
Your Giunta's duties.

140

*Lor.*How!—*my* Giunta!*Bar.**Yours!*

They speak your language, watch your nod, approve  
Your plans, and do your work. Are they not *yours*?

*Lor.* You talk unwarily. 'Twere best they hear not  
This from you.

*Bar.*

Oh! they'll hear as much one day  
From louder tongues than mine; they have gone beyond  
Even their exorbitance of power: and when  
This happens in the most contemned and abject  
States, stung humanity will rise to check it.

*Lor.* You talk but idly.

*Bar.*

That remains for proof. 150  
Here come our colleagues.

*Enter the Deputation as before.*

*Chief of the Ten.*

Is the Duke aware

We seek his presence?

*Att.*

He shall be informed.

*[Exit Attendant.]*

*Bar.* The Duke is with his son.

*Chief of the Ten.*

If it be so,

We will remit him till the rites are over.

Let us return. 'Tis time enough to-morrow.

*Lor. (aside to Bar.).* Now the rich man's hell-fire upon  
your tongue,

Unquenched, unquenchable! I'll have it torn  
From its vile babbling roots, till you shall utter  
Nothing but sobs through blood, for this! Sage Signors,  
I pray ye be not hasty. *[Aloud to the others.]*

*Bar.*

But be human!

160

*Lor.* See, the Duke comes!

*Enter the DOGE.*

*Doge.*

I have obeyed your summons.

*Chief of the Ten.* We come once more to urge our past  
request.

*Doge.* And I to answer.

*Chief of the Ten.*

What?

*Doge.*

My only answer.

You have heard it.

*Chief of the Ten.* Hear *you* then the last decree,  
Definitive and absolute!

*Doge.*

To the point—

To the point! I know of old the forms of office,  
And gentle preludes to strong acts.—Go on!

*Chief of the Ten.* You are no longer Doge; you are  
released

From your imperial oath as Sovereign;

Your ducal robes must be put off; but for

170

Your services, the State allots the appanage

Already mentioned in our former congress.

Three days are left you to remove from hence,

Under the penalty to see confiscated

All your own private fortune.

*Doge.*

That last clause,

I am proud to say, would not enrich the treasury.

*Chief of the Ten.* Your answer, Duke!

*Lor.*

Your answer, Francis

Foscari!

*Doge.* If I could have foreseen that my old age

Was prejudicial to the State, the Chief

Of the Republic never would have shown

180

Himself so far ungrateful, as to place

His own high dignity before his Country;

But this *life* having been so many years

*Not* useless to that Country, I would fain

Have consecrated my last moments to her.

But the decree being rendered, I obey.<sup>1 1</sup>

*Chief of the Ten.* If you would have the three days  
named extended,

We willingly will lengthen them to eight,

As sign of our esteem.

*Doge.*

Not eight hours, Signor,

i. *The act is passed—I will obey it.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [For this speech, see Daru (who quotes from Pietro Giustiniani *Histoire, etc.*, 1821, ii. 534).]

Not even eight minutes—there 's the ducal ring, 190  
[*Taking off his ring and cap.*

And there the ducal diadem ! And so

The Adriatic 's free to wed another.

*Chief of the Ten.* Yet go not forth so quickly.

*Doge.*

I am old, sir,

And even to move but slowly must begin

To move betimes. Methinks I see amongst you

A face I know not.—Senator ! your name,

You, by your garb, Chief of the Forty !

*Mem.*

Signor,

I am the son of Marco Memmo.

*Doge.*

Ah !

Your father was my friend.—But *sons* and *fathers* !—

What, ho ! my servants there !

*Atten.*

My Prince !

*Doge.*

No Prince— 200

There are the princes of the Prince ! [*Pointing to the*  
*Ten's Deputation.*—Prepare

To part from hence upon the instant.

*Chief of the Ten.*

Why

So rashly ? 'twill give scandal.

*Doge.*

Answer that ;

It is your province.—Sirs, bestir yourselves : [*To the Ten.*

[*To the Servants.*

There is one burthen which I beg you bear

With care, although 'tis past all farther harm—

But I will look to that myself.

*Bar.*

He means

The body of his son.

*Doge.*

And call Marina,

My daughter !

*Enter MARINA.*

*Doge.* Get thee ready, we must mourn  
Elsewhere.

*Mar.* And everywhere.

*Doge.* True ; but in freedom, 210  
Without these jealous spies upon the great.  
Signors, you may depart : what would you more ?

We are going: do you fear that we shall bear  
 The palace with us? Its *old* walls, ten times  
 As *old* as I am, and I'm very old,  
 Have served you, so have I, and I and they  
 Could tell a tale; but I invoke them not  
 To fall upon you! else they would, as erst  
 The pillars of stone Dagon's temple on  
 The Israelite and his Philistine foes.

220

Such power I do believe there might exist  
 In such a curse as mine, provoked by such  
 As you; but I curse not. Adieu, good Signors!  
 May the next Duke be better than the present!

*Lor.* The *present* Duke is Paschal Malipiero.

*Doge.* Not till I pass the threshold of these doors.

*Lor.* Saint Mark's great bell is soon about to toll  
 For his inauguration.

*Doge.* Earth and Heaven!

Ye will reverberate this peal; and I  
 Live to hear this!—the first Doge who e'er heard 230  
 Such sound for his successor: happier he,  
 My attainted predecessor, stern Faliero—  
 This insult at the least was spared him.

*Lor.* What!

Do you regret a traitor?

*Doge.* No—I merely

Envy the dead.

*Chief of the Ten.* My Lord, if you indeed  
 Are bent upon this rash abandonment  
 Of the State's palace, at the least retire  
 By the private staircase, which conducts you towards  
 The landing-place of the canal.

*Doge.* No. I

Will now descend the stairs by which I mounted 240  
 To sovereignty—the Giants' Stairs, on whose  
 Broad eminence I was invested Duke.

My services have called me up those steps,  
 The malice of my foes will drive me down them.<sup>1</sup>

There five and thirty years ago was I  
 Installed, and traversed these same halls, from which

1. [See Daru's *Histoire*, etc., 1821, ii. 535. The *Cronaca Augustini* is the authority for the anecdote (see *The Two Doges*, 1891, p. 126).]

I never thought to be divorced except  
A corse—a corse, it might be, fighting for them—  
But not pushed hence by fellow-citizens.  
But come; my son and I will go together— 250  
He to his grave, and I to pray for mine.

*Chief of the Ten.* What! thus in public?

*Doge.*

I was publicly

Elected, and so will I be deposed.

Marina! art thou willing?

*Mar.*

Here's my arm!

*Doge.* And here my *staff*: thus propped will I go  
forth.

*Chief of the Ten.* It must not be—the people will  
perceive it.

*Doge.* The people!—There's no people, you well  
know it,

Else you dare not deal thus by them or me.

There is a *populace*, perhaps, whose looks

May shame you; but they dare not groan nor curse  
you, 260

Save with their hearts and eyes.

*Chief of the Ten.*

You speak in passion,

Else——

*Doge.* You have reason. I have spoken much  
More than my wont: it is a foible which  
Was not of mine, but more excuses you,  
Inasmuch as it shows, that I approach  
A dotage which may justify this deed  
Of yours, although the law does not, nor will.  
Farewell, sirs!

*Bar.* You shall not depart without

An escort fitting past and present rank.

We will accompany, with due respect,

The Doge unto his private palace. Say!

My brethren, will we not? 270

*Different voices.*

Aye!—Aye!

*Doge.*

You shall not

Stir—in my train, at least. I entered here

As Sovereign—I go out as citizen

By the same portals, but as citizen.

All these vain ceremonies are base insults,



Which only ulcerate the heart the more,  
 Applying poisons there as antidotes.  
 Pomp is for Princes—I am none !—That 's false,  
 I *am*, but only to these gates.—Ah !

*Lor.*

Hark !

280

[*The great bell of St. Mark's tolls.*

*Bar.* The bell !

*Chief of the Ten.* St. Mark's, which tolls for the  
 election

Of Malipiero.

*Doge.* Well I recognise

The sound ! I heard it once, but once before,  
 And that is five and thirty years ago ;  
 Even *then* I *was not young*.

*Bar.*

Sit down, my Lord !

You tremble.

*Doge.* 'Tis the knell of my poor boy !

My heart aches bitterly.

*Bar.*

I pray you sit.

*Doge.* No ; my seat here has been a throne till now.  
 Marina ! let us go.

*Mar.*

Most readily.

*Doge* (*walks a few steps, then stops*). I feel athirst—  
 will no one bring me here

290

A cup of water ?

*Bar.*

I——

*Mar.*

And I——

*Lor.*

And I——

[*The Doge takes a goblet from the hand of LOREDANO.*

*Doge.* I take *yours*, Loredano, from the hand  
 Most fit for such an hour as this.<sup>1</sup>

*Lor.*

Why so ?

*Doge.* 'Tis said that our Venetian crystal has  
 Such pure antipathy to poisons as  
 To burst, if aught of venom touches it.  
 You bore this goblet, and it is not broken.

*Lor.* Well, sir !

*Doge.*

Then it is false, or you are true.  
 For my own part, I credit neither ; 'tis

1. *I take yours, Loredano—'tis the draught  
 Most fitting such an hour as this.—[MS. M.]*

An idle legend.

*Mar.* You talk wildly, and 300  
Had better now be seated, nor as yet  
Depart. Ah! now you look as looked my husband!

*Bar.* He sinks!—support him!—quick—a chair—  
support him!

*Doge.* The bell tolls on!—let's hence—my brain's on  
fire!

*Bar.* I do beseech you, lean upon us!

*Doge.* No!  
A Sovereign should die standing. My poor boy!  
Off with your arms!—*That bell!*<sup>1</sup>

[*The DOGE drops down and dies.*

*Mar.* My God! My God!

*Bar. (to Lor.).* Behold! your work's completed!

*Chief of the Ten.* Is there then  
No aid? Call in assistance!

*Att.* 'Tis all over.

*Chief of the Ten.* If it be so, at least his obsequies 310  
Shall be such as befits his name and nation,  
His rank and his devotion to the duties  
Of the realm, while his age permitted him  
To do himself and them full justice. Brethren,  
Say, shall it not be so?

*Bar.* He has not had  
The misery to die a subject where<sup>1</sup>  
He reigned: then let his funeral rites be princely.<sup>2</sup>

*Chief of the Ten.* We are agreed, then?

*All, except Lor., answer,* Yes.

i. *The wretchedness to die* —.—[*MS. M.*]

1. [*Vide ante*, Introduction to *The Two Foscari*, p. 118.]

2. ["A decree was at once passed that a public funeral should be accorded to Foscari, . . . and the bells of St. Mark were ordered to peal nine times. . . . The same Council also determined that on Thursday night, November 3, the corpse should be carried into the room of the 'Signori di notte,' dressed in a golden mantle, with the ducal bonnet on his head, golden spurs on his feet, . . . the gold sword by his side." But Foscari's wife, Marina (or Maria) Nani, opposed. "She declined to give up the body, which she had caused to be dressed in plain clothes, and she maintained that no one but herself should provide for the funeral expenses, even should she have to give up her dower." It is needless to add that her protest was unavailing, and that the decree of the Ten was carried into effect. — *The Two Doges*, 1891, pp. 129, 130.]

*Chief of the Ten.* Heaven's peace be with him !

*Mar.* Signors, your pardon : this is mockery. 320  
Juggle no more with that poor remnant, which,  
A moment since, while yet it had a soul,  
(A soul by whom you have increased your Empire,  
And made your power as proud as was his glory),  
You banished from his palace and tore down  
From his high place, with such relentless coldness ;  
And now, when he can neither know these honours,  
Nor would accept them if he could, you, Signors,  
Purpose, with idle and superfluous pomp,  
To make a pageant over what you trampled. 330  
A princely funeral will be your reproach,  
And not his honour.

*Chief of the Ten.* Lady, we revoke not  
Our purposes so readily.

*Mar.* I know it,  
As far as touches torturing the living.  
I thought the dead had been beyond even *you*,  
Though (some, no doubt) consigned to powers which may  
Resemble that you exercise on earth.  
Leave him to me ; you would have done so for  
His dregs of life, which you have kindly shortened :  
It is my last of duties, and may prove 340  
A dreary comfort in my desolation.<sup>1</sup>  
Grief is fantastical, and loves the dead,  
And the apparel of the grave.

*Chief of the Ten.* Do you  
Pretend still to this office ?

*Mar.* I do, Signor.  
Though his possessions have been all consumed  
In the State's service, I have still my dowry,  
Which shall be consecrated to his rites,  
And those of—— [She stops with agitation.

*Chief of the Ten.* Best retain it for your children.

*Mar.* Aye, they are fatherless, I thank you.

*Chief of the Ten.* We  
Cannot comply with your request. His relics 350  
Shall be exposed with wonted pomp, and followed  
Unto their home by the new Doge, not clad

1. — comfort to my desolation.—[MS. M.]

As *Doge*, but simply as a senator.

*Mar.* I have heard of murderers, who have interred  
Their victims ; but ne'er heard, until this hour,  
Of so much splendour in hypocrisy  
O'er those they slew.<sup>1</sup> I've heard of widows' tears—  
Alas ! I have shed some—always thanks to you !  
I've heard of *heirs* in sables—you have left none  
To the deceased, so you would act the part 360  
Of such. Well, sirs, your will be done ! as one day,  
I trust, Heaven's will be done too !<sup>1</sup>

*Chief of the Ten.* Know you, Lady,  
To whom ye speak, and perils of such speech ?

*Mar.* I know the former better than yourselves ;  
The latter—like yourselves ; and can face both.  
Wish you more funerals ?

*Bar.* Heed not her rash words ;  
Her circumstances must excuse her bearing.

*Chief of the Ten.* We will not note them down.

*Bar.* (turning to *Lor.*, who is writing upon his tablets).  
What art thou writing,  
With such an earnest brow, upon thy tablets ?

*Lor.* (pointing to the *Doge's* body). That he has paid  
me !<sup>2</sup>

i. *I trust Heaven's will be done also.*—[MS.]

1. The Venetians appear to have had a particular turn for breaking the hearts of their Doges. The following is another instance of the kind in the Doge Marco Barbarigo : he was succeeded by his brother Agostino Barbarigo, whose chief merit is here mentioned.—"Le doge, blessé de trouver constamment un contradicteur et un censeur si amer dans son frère, lui dit un jour en plein conseil : 'Messire Augustin, vous faites tout votre possible pour hâter ma mort ; vous vous flattez de me succéder ; mais, si les autres vous connaissent aussi bien que je vous connais, ils n'auront garde de vous élire.' Là-dessus il se leva, ému de colère, rentra dans son appartement, et mourut quelques jours après. Ce frère, contre lequel il s'était emporté, fut précisément le successeur qu'on lui donna. C'était un mérite dont on aimait à tenir compte ; surtout à un parent, de s'être mis en opposition avec le chef de la république."—DARU, *Hist. de Venise*, 1821, iii. 29.

2. "*L'ha pagata*." An historical fact. See *Hist. de Venise*, par P. DARU, 1821, ii. 528, 529.

[Daru quotes Palazzi's *Fasti Ducales* as his authority for this story. According to Pietro Giustiniani (*Storia*, lib. viii.), Jacopo Loredano was at pains to announce the decree of the Ten to the Doge in courteous and considerate terms, and begged him to pardon him for what it was his duty to do. Romanin points out that this version of the interview is inconsistent with the famous "*L'ha pagata*."—*Storia*, etc., iv. 290, note 1.]

*Chief of the Ten.* What debt did he owe you? 370  
*Lor.* A long and just one; Nature's debt and mine.<sup>1</sup>  
[*Curtain falls.*<sup>2</sup>

1. [Here the original MS. ends. The two lines which follow, were added by Gifford. In the margin of the MS. Byron has written, "If the last line should appear obscure to those who do not recollect the historical fact mentioned in the first act of Loredano's inscription in his book, of 'Doge Foscari, debtor for the deaths of my father and uncle,' you may add the following lines to the conclusion of the last act:—

*Chief of the Ten.* For what has he repaid thee?  
*Lor.* For my father's  
And father's brother's death—by his son's and own!

Ask Gifford about this."]

2. [The *Appendix* to the First Edition of *The Two Foscari* consisted of (i.) an extract from P. Daru's *Histoire de la République Française*, 1821, ii. 520-537; (ii.) an extract from J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Âge*, 1815, x. 36-46; and (iii.) a note in response to certain charges of plagiarism brought against the author in the *Literary Gazette* and elsewhere; and to Southey's indictment of the "Satanic School," which had recently appeared in the Preface to the Laureate's *Vision of Judgement* (*Poetical Works of Robert Southey*, 1838, x. 202-207). See, too, the Introduction to *The Vision of Judgment*, *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 475-480.]

# CAIN:

## A MYSTERY.

"Now the Serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made."

*Genesis,  
Chapter 3rd, verse 1.*



## INTRODUCTION TO *CAIN*.

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*CAIN* was begun at Ravenna, July 16, and finished September 9, 1821 (*vide* MS. M.). Six months before, when he was at work on the first act of *Sardanapalus*, Byron had "pondered" *Cain*, but it was not till *Sardanapalus* and a second historical play, *The Two Foscari*, had been written, copied out, and sent to England, that he indulged his genius with a third drama—on "a metaphysical subject, something in the style of *Manfred*" (*Letters*, 1901, v. 189).

Goethe's comment on reading and reviewing *Cain* was that he should be surprised if Byron did not pursue the treatment of such "biblical subjects," as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (*Conversations, etc.*, 1879, p. 62); and, many years after, he told Crabb Robinson (*Diary*, 1869, ii. 435) that Byron should have lived "to execute his vocation . . . to dramatize the Old Testament." He was better equipped for such a task than might have been imagined. A Scottish schoolboy, "from a child he had known the Scriptures," and, as his *Hebrew Melodies* testify, he was not unwilling to turn to the Bible as a source of poetic inspiration. Moreover, he was born with the religious temperament. Questions "of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate," exercised his curiosity because they appealed to his imagination and moved his spirit. He was eager to plunge into controversy with friends and advisers who challenged or rebuked him, Hodgson, for instance, or Dallas; and he responded with remarkable amenity to the strictures and exhortations of such orthodox professors as Mr. Sheppard and Dr. Kennedy. He was, no doubt, from first to last a *heretic*, impatient, not to say contemptuous, of authority, but he was by no means indifferent to religion altogether. To "argue about it and about" was a necessity, if not an agreeable relief, to his intellectual energies. It would appear from the Ravenna diary (January 28, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 190, 191), that the conception of Lucifer was working in his brain



before the "tragedy of Cain" was actually begun. He had been recording a "thought" which had come to him, that "at the very height of human desire and pleasure, a certain sense of doubt and sorrow"—an *amari aliquid* which links the future to the past, and so blots out the present—"mingles with our bliss," making it of none effect, and, by way of moral or corollary to his soliloquy, he adds three lines of verse headed, "Thought for a speech of Lucifer in the Tragedy of *Cain*"—

"Were Death an *Evil*, would I let thee live?  
Fool! live as I live—as thy father lives,  
And thy son's sons shall live for evermore."

In these three lines, which were not inserted in the play, and in the preceding "thought," we have the key-note to *Cain*. "Man walketh in a vain shadow"—a shadow which he can never overtake, the shadow of an eternally postponed fruition. With a being capable of infinite satisfaction, he is doomed to realize failure in attainment. In all that is best and most enjoyable, "the rapturous moment and the placid hour," there is a foretaste of "Death the Unknown"! The tragedy of *Manfred* lies in remorse for the inevitable past; the tragedy of *Cain*, in revolt against the limitations of the inexorable present.

The investigation of the "sources" of *Cain* does not lead to any very definite conclusion (see *Lord Byron's Cain und Seine Quellen*, von Alfred Schaffner, 1880). He was pleased to call his play "a Mystery," and, in his Preface (*vide post*, p. 207), Byron alludes to the Old Mysteries as "those very profane productions, whether in English, French, Italian, or Spanish." The first reprint of the *Chester Plays* was published by the Roxburghe Club in 1818, but Byron's knowledge of Mystery Plays was probably derived from *Dodsley's Plays* (ed. 1780, l., xxxiii.-xlii.), or from John Stevens's Continuation of Dugdale's *Monasticon* (*vide post*, p. 207), or possibly, as Herr Schaffner suggests, from Warton's *History of English Poetry*, ed. 1871, ii. 222-230. He may, too, have witnessed some belated *Rappresentazione* of the Creation and Fall at Ravenna, or in one of the remoter towns or villages of Italy. There is a superficial resemblance between the treatment of the actual encounter of Cain and Abel, and the conventional rendering of the same incident in the *Ludus Coventriae*, and in the *Mistère du Viel Testament*; but it is unlikely that he had closely studied any one Mystery Play at first hand. On the other hand, his recollections of Gessner's *Death of Abel*, which "he had never read since he was eight years old," were clearer than he imagined. Not

only in such minor matters as the destruction of Cain's altar by a whirlwind, and the substitution of the Angel of the Lord for the *Deus* of the Mysteries, but in the Teutonic domesticities of Cain and Adah, and the evangelical piety of Adam and Abel, there is a reflection, if not an imitation, of the German idyll (see Gessner's *Death of Abel*, ed. 1797, pp. 80, 102).

Of his indebtedness to Milton he makes no formal acknowledgment, but he was not ashamed to shelter himself behind Milton's shield when he was attacked on the score of blasphemy and profanity. "If *Cain* be blasphemous, *Paradise Lost* is blasphemous" (letter to Murray, Pisa, February 8, 1822), was, he would fain believe, a conclusive answer to his accusers. But apart from verbal parallels or coincidences, there is a genuine affinity between Byron's Lucifer and Milton's Satan. Lucifer, like Satan, is "not less than Archangel ruined," a repulsed but "unvanquished Titan," marred by a demonic sorrow, a confessor though a rival of Omnipotence. He is a majestic and, as a rule, a serious and solemn spirit, who compels the admiration and possibly the sympathy of the reader. There is, however, another strain in his ghostly attributes, which betrays a more recent consanguinity: now and again he gives token that he is of the lineage of Mephistopheles. He is sometimes, though rarely, a mocking as well as a rebellious spirit, and occasionally indulges in a grim *persiflage* beneath the dignity if not the capacity of Satan. It is needless to add that Lucifer has a most lifelike personality of his own. The conception of the spirit of evil justifying an eternal antagonism to the Creator from the standpoint of a superior morality, may, perhaps, be traced to a Manichean source, but it has been touched with a new emotion. Milton's devil is an abstraction of infernal pride—

"Sole Positive of Night !  
Antipathist of Light !  
Fate's only essence ! primal scorpion rod—  
The one permitted opposite of God ! "

Goethe's devil is an abstraction of scorn. He "maketh a mock" alike of good and evil ! But Byron's devil is a spirit, yet a mortal too—the traducer, because he has suffered for his sins ; the deceiver, because he is self-deceived ; the hooper against hope that there is a ransom for the soul in perfect self-will and not in perfect self-sacrifice. Byron did not uphold Lucifer, but he "had passed that way," and could imagine a spiritual warfare not only against the *Deus* of the Mysteries or of the Book of Genesis, but against what he

believed and acknowledged to be the Author and Principle of good.

*Autres temps, autres mœurs !* It is all but impossible for the modern reader to appreciate the audacity of *Cain*, or to realize the alarm and indignation which it aroused by its appearance. Byron knew that he was raising a tempest, and pleads, in his Preface, "that with regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a clergyman," and again and again he assures his correspondents (e.g. to Murray, November 23, 1821, "*Cain* is nothing more than a drama ;" to Moore, March 4, 1822, "With respect to Religion, can I never convince you that *I* have no such opinions as the characters in that drama, which seems to have frightened everybody?" *Letters*, 1901, v. 469 ; vi. 30) that it is Lucifer and not Byron who puts such awkward questions with regard to the "politics of paradise" and the origin of evil. Nobody seems to have believed him. It was taken for granted that Lucifer was the mouthpiece of Byron, that the author of *Don Juan* was not "on the side of the angels."

Little need be said of the "literature," the pamphlets and poems which were evoked by the publication of *Cain: A Mystery*. One of the most prominent assailants (said to be the Rev. H. J. Todd (1763-1845), Archdeacon of Cleveland, 1832, author *inter alia* of *Original Sin*, *Free Will*, etc., 1818) issued *A Remonstrance to Mr. John Murray, respecting a Recent Publication*, 1822, signed "Oxonienensis." The sting of the *Remonstrance* lay in the exposure of the fact that Byron was indebted to Bayle's *Dictionary* for his rabbinical legends, and that he had derived from the same source his Manichean doctrines of the *Two Principles*, etc., and other "often-refuted sophisms" with regard to the origin of evil. Byron does not borrow more than a poet and a gentleman is at liberty to acquire by way of raw material, but it cannot be denied that he had read and inwardly digested more than one of Bayle's "most objectionable articles" (e.g. "Adam," "Eve," "Abel," "Manichees," "Paulicians," etc.). The *Remonstrance* was answered in *A Letter to Sir Walter Scott, etc.*, by "Harroviensis." Byron welcomed such a "Defender of the Faith," and was anxious that Murray should print the letter together with the poem. But Murray belittled the "defender," and was upbraided in turn for his slowness of heart (letter to Murray, June 6, 1822, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 76).

Fresh combatants rushed into the fray: "Philo-Milton," with a *Vindication of the "Paradise Lost" from the charge of exculpating "Cain: A Mystery"*, London, 1822 ; "Britannicus," with a pamphlet entitled, *Revolutionary Causes, etc.*,

and *A Postscript containing Strictures on "Cain," etc.*, London, 1822, etc.; but their works, which hardly deserve to be catalogued, have perished with them. Finally, in 1830, a barrister named Harding Grant, author of *Chancery Practice*, compiled a work (*Lord Byron's "Cain," etc., with Notes*) of more than four hundred pages, in which he treats "the proceedings and speeches of Lucifer with the same earnestness as if they were existing and earthly personages." But it was "a week too late." The "Coryphæus of the Satanic School" had passed away, and the tumult had "dwindled to a calm."

*Cain* "appeared in conjunction with" *Sardanapalus* and *The Two Foscari*, December 19, 1821. Last but not least of the three plays, it had been announced "by a separate advertisement (*Morning Chronicle*, November 24, 1821), for the purpose of exciting the greater curiosity" (*Memoirs of the Life, etc.* [by John Watkins], 1822, p. 383), and it was no sooner published than it was pirated. In the following January, "*Cain: A Mystery*, by the author of *Don Juan*," was issued by W. Benbow, at Castle Street, Leicester Square (the notorious "Byron Head," which Southey described as "one of those preparatory schools for the brothel and the gallows, where obscenity, sedition, and blasphemy are retailed in drams for the vulgar" !).

Murray had paid Byron £2710 for the three tragedies, and in order to protect the copyright, he applied, through counsel (Lancelot Shadwell, afterwards Vice-Chancellor), for an injunction in Chancery to stop the sale of piratical editions of *Cain*. In delivering judgment (February 12, 1822), the Chancellor, Lord Eldon (see *Courier*, Wednesday, February 13), replying to Shadwell, drew a comparison between *Cain* and *Paradise Lost*, "which he had read from beginning to end during the course of the last Long Vacation—*solicite jucunda oblivia vita*." No one, he argued, could deny that the object and effects of *Paradise Lost* were "not to bring into disrepute," but "to promote reverence for our religion," and, *per contra*, no one could affirm that it was impossible to arrive at an opposite conclusion with regard to "the Preface, the poem, the general tone and manner of *Cain*." It was a question for a jury. A jury might decide that *Cain* was blasphemous, and void of copyright; and as there was a reasonable doubt in his mind as to the character of the book, and a doubt as to the conclusion at which a jury would arrive, he was compelled to refuse the injunction. According to Dr. Smiles (*Memoir of John Murray*, 1891, i. 428), the decision of a jury was taken, and an injunction eventually granted. If so, it was ineffectual, for Benbow issued

another edition of *Cain* in 1824 (see Jacob's *Reports*, p. 474, note). See, too, the case of *Murray v. Benbow* and Another, as reported in the *Examiner*, February 17, 1822; and cases of *Wolcot v. Walker*, *Southey v. Sherwood*, *Murray v. Benbow*, and *Lawrence v. Smith* [*Quarterly Review*, April, 1822, vol. xxvii. pp. 120-138].

"*Cain*," said Moore (February 9, 1822), "has made a sensation." Friends and champions, the press, the public "turned up their thumbs." Gifford shook his head; Hobhouse "launched out into a most violent invective" (letter to Murray, November 24, 1821); Jeffrey, in the *Edinburgh*, was regretful and hortatory; Heber, in the *Quarterly*, was fault-finding and contemptuous. The "parsons preached at it from Kentish Town to Pisa" (letter to Moore, February 20, 1822). Even "the very highest authority in the land," his Majesty King George IV., "expressed his disapprobation of the blasphemy and licentiousness of Lord Byron's writings" (*Examiner*, February 17, 1822). Byron himself was forced to admit that "my Mont Saint Jean seems Cain" (*Don Juan*, Canto XI. stanza lvi. line 2). The many were unanimous in their verdict, but the higher court of the few reversed the judgment.

Goethe said that "Its beauty is such as we shall not see a second time in the world" (*Conversations, etc.*, 1874, p. 261); Scott, in speaking of "the very grand and tremendous drama of *Cain*," said that the author had "matched Milton on his own ground" (letter to Murray, December 4, 1821, *vide post*, p. 206); "*Cain*," wrote Shelley to Gisborne (April 10, 1822), "is apocalyptic; it is a revelation never before communicated to man."

Uncritical praise, as well as uncritical censure, belongs to the past; but the play remains, a singular exercise of "poetic energy," a confession, *ex animo*, of "the burthen of the mystery, . . . the heavy and the weary weight Of all this unintelligible world."

For reviews of *Cain: A Mystery*, *vide ante*, "Introduction to *Sardanapalus*," p. 5; see, too, *Eclectic Review*, May, 1822, N.S. vol. xvii. pp. 418-427; *Examiner*, June 2, 1822; *British Review*, 1822, vol. xix. pp. 94-102.

For O'Doherty's parody of the "Pisa" Letter, February 8, 1822, see *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, February, 1822, vol. xi. pp. 215-217; and for a review of Harding Grant's *Lord Byron's Cain, etc.*, see *Fraser's Magazine*, April, 1831, iii. 285-304.

TO  
SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.,

THIS MYSTERY OF CAIN

IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.<sup>1</sup>

1. [On the 13th December [1821] Sir Walter received a copy of *Cain*, as yet unpublished, from Murray, who had been instructed to ask whether he had any objection to having the "Mystery" dedicated to him. He replied in these words—

"Edinburgh, 4th December, 1821.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I accept, with feelings of great obligation, the flattering proposal of Lord Byron to prefix my name to the very grand and tremendous drama of 'Cain.'\* I may be partial to it, and you will

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\* ["However, the praise often given to Byron has been so exaggerated as to provoke, perhaps, a reaction in which he is unduly disparaged. 'As various in composition as Shakespeare himself, Lord Byron has embraced,' says Sir Walter Scott, 'every topic of human life, and sounded every string on the divine harp, from its slightest to its most powerful and heart-astounding tones. . . . In the very grand and tremendous drama of *Cain*,' etc. . . . 'And Lord Byron has done all this,' Scott adds, 'while managing his pen with the careless and negligent ease of a man of quality.'"—*Poetry of Byron*, chosen and arranged by Matthew Arnold, 1881, p. xiii.

Scott does not add anything of the kind. The comparison with Shakespeare was written after Byron's death in May, 1824; the appreciation of *Cain* in December, 1821 (*vide supra*); while the allusion to "a man of quality" is to be found in an article contributed to the *Quarterly Review* in 1816!]

allow I have cause; but I do not know that his Muse has ever taken so lofty a flight amid her former soarings. He has certainly matched Milton on his own ground. Some part of the language is bold, and may shock one class of readers, whose line will be adopted by others out of affectation or envy. But then they must condemn the 'Paradise Lost,' if they have a mind to be consistent. The fiend-like reasoning and bold blasphemy of the fiend and of his pupil lead exactly to the point which was to be expected,—the commission of the first murder, and the ruin and despair of the perpetrator.

"I do not see how any one can accuse the author himself of Manicheism. The Devil talks the language of that sect, doubtless; because, not being able to deny the existence of the Good Principle, he endeavours to exalt himself—the Evil Principle—to a seeming equality with the Good; but such arguments, in the mouth of such a being, can only be used to deceive and to betray. Lord Byron might have made this more evident, by placing in the mouth of Adam, or of some good and protecting spirit, the reasons which render the existence of moral evil consistent with the general benevolence of the Deity. The great key to the mystery is, perhaps, the imperfection of our own faculties, which see and feel strongly the partial evils which press upon us, but know too little of the general system of the universe, to be aware how the existence of these is to be reconciled with the benevolence of the great Creator.

"To drop these speculations, you have much occasion for some mighty spirit, like Lord Byron, to come down and trouble the waters; for, excepting 'The John Bull,'\* you seem stagnating strangely in London.

"Yours, my dear Sir,

"Very truly,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"To John Murray, Esq."—*Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, by J. G. Lockhart, Esq., 1838, iii. 92, 93.]

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\* [The first number of *John Bull*, "For God, the King, and the People," was published Sunday, December 17, 1820. Theodore Hook was the editor, and it is supposed that he owed his appointment to the intervention of Sir Walter Scott. The *raison d'être* of *John Bull* was to write up George IV., and to write down Queen Caroline. "The national movement (in favour of the Queen) was arrested; and George IV. had mainly *John Bull* to thank for that result."—*A Sketch*, [by J. G. Lockhart], 1852, p. 45.]

## PREFACE.

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THE following scenes are entitled "A Mystery," in conformity with the ancient title annexed to dramas upon similar subjects, which were styled "Mysteries, or Moralities."<sup>1</sup> The author has by no means taken the same liberties with his subject which were common formerly, as may be seen by any reader curious enough to refer to those very profane productions, whether in English, French, Italian, or Spanish. The author has endeavoured to preserve the language adapted to his characters; and where it is (and this is but rarely) taken from actual *Scripture*, he has made as little alteration, even of words, as the rhythm would permit. The reader will recollect that the book of Genesis does not state

1. ["Mysteries," or Mystery Plays, were prior to and distinct from "Moralities." Byron seems to have had some acquaintance with the archæology of the drama, but it is not easy to divine the source or extent of his knowledge. He may have received and read the Roxburghe reprint of the *Chester Plays*, published in 1818; but it is most probable that he had read the pages devoted to mystery plays in Warton's *History of Poetry*, or that he had met with a version of the *Ludus Coventrie* (reprinted by J. O. Halliwell Phillipps, in 1841), printed in Stevens's continuation of Dugdale's *Monasticon*, 1722, i. 139-153. There is a sixteenth-century edition of *Le Mystère du Viel Testament*, which was reprinted by the Baron James de Rothschild, in 1878 (see for "De la Mort d'Abel et de la Malediction Cayn," pp. 103-113); but it is improbable that it had come under Byron's notice. For a quotation from an Italian Mystery Play, *vide post*, p. 264; and for Spanish "Mystery Plays," see *Teatro Completo de Juan del Encina*, "Proemio," Madrid, 1893, and *History of Spanish Literature*, by George Ticknor, 1888, i. 257. For instances of the profanity of Mystery Plays, see the *Towneley Plays* ("Mactacio Abel," p. 7), first published by the Surtees Society in 1836, and republished by the Early English Text Society, 1897, E.S. No. lxxi.]



that Eve was tempted by a demon, but by "the Serpent;"<sup>1</sup> and that only because he was "the most subtil of all the beasts of the field." Whatever interpretation the Rabbins and the Fathers may have put upon this, I take the words as I find them, and reply, with Bishop Watson<sup>2</sup> upon similar occasions, when the Fathers were quoted to him as Moderator in the schools of Cambridge, "Behold the Book!"—holding up the Scripture. It is to be recollected, that my present subject has nothing to do with the *New Testament*, to which no reference can be here made without anachronism.<sup>3</sup> With the poems upon similar topics I have not been recently familiar. Since I was twenty I have never read Milton; but I had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference. Gesner's "Death of Abel" I have never read since I was eight years of age, at Aberdeen. The

1. [For the contention that "the snake was the snake"—no more (*vide post*, p. 211), see *La Bible enfin Expliquée*, etc.; *Œuvres Complètes de Voltaire*, Paris, 1837, vi. 338, note. "La conversation de la femme et du serpent n'est point racontée comme une chose surnaturelle et incroyable, comme un miracle, ou comme une allégorie." See, too, Bayle (*Hist. and Crit. Dictionary*, 1735, ii. 851, art. "Eve," note A), who quotes Josephus, Paracelsus, and "some Rabbins," to the effect that it was an actual serpent which tempted Eve; and compare *Critical Remarks on the Hebrew Scriptures*, by the Rev. Alexander Geddes, LL.D., 1800, p. 42.]

2. [Richard Watson (1737-1816), Bishop of Llandaff, 1782, was appointed Moderator of the Schools in 1762, and Regius Professor of Divinity October 31, 1771. According to his own story (*Anecdotes of the Life of Richard Watson*, 1817, p. 39), "I determined to study nothing but my Bible. . . . I had no prejudice against, no predilection for, the Church of England, but a sincere regard for the Church of Christ, and an insuperable objection to every degree of dogmatical intolerance. I never troubled myself with answering any arguments which the opponents in the Divinity Schools brought against the articles of the Church, . . . but I used on such occasions to say to them, holding the New Testament in my hand, '*En sacrum codicem!*' Here is the foundation of truth! Why do you follow the streams derived from it by the sophistry, or polluted by the passions, of man?" It may be conceived that Watson's appeal to "Scripture" was against the sentence of orthodoxy. His authority as "a school Divine" is on a par with that of the author of *Cain*, or of an earlier theologian who "quoted Genesis like a very learned clerk"!]

3. [Byron breaks through his self-imposed canon with regard to the New Testament. There are allusions to the doctrine of the Atonement, act i. sc. 1, lines 163-166; act iii. sc. 1, lines 85-88; to the descent into Hades, act i. sc. 1, lines 541, 542; and to the miraculous walking on the Sea of Galilee, act ii. sc. 1, lines 16-20.]

general impression of my recollection is delight; but of the contents I remember only that Cain's wife was called Mahala, and Abel's Thirza; in the following pages I have called them "Adah" and "Zillah," the earliest female names which occur in Genesis. They were those of Lamech's wives: those of Cain and Abel are not called by their names. Whether, then, a coincidence of subject may have caused the same in expression, I know nothing, and care as little. [I<sup>1</sup> am prepared to be accused of Manicheism,<sup>2</sup> or some other hard name ending in *ism*, which makes a formidable figure and awful sound in the eyes and ears of those who would be as much puzzled to explain the terms so bandied about, as the liberal and pious indulgers in such epithets. Against such I can defend myself, or, if necessary, I can attack in turn. "Claw for claw, as Conan said to Satan, and the deevil take the shortest nails" (Waverley).<sup>3</sup>]

The reader will please to bear in mind (what few choose to recollect), that there is no allusion to a future state in any of the books of Moses, nor indeed in the Old Testament. For a reason for this extraordinary omission he may consult Warburton's "Divine Legation;"<sup>4</sup>

1. [The words enclosed in brackets are taken from an original draft of the Preface.]

2. [The Manichæans (the disciples of Mani or Manes, third century A.D.) held that there were two co-eternal Creators—a God of Darkness who made the body, and a God of Light who was responsible for the soul—and that it was the aim and function of the good spirit to rescue the soul, the spiritual part of man, from the possession and grasp of the body, which had been created by and was in the possession of the spirit of evil. St. Augustine passed through a stage of Manicheism, and in after-life exposed and refuted the heretical tenets which he had advocated, and with which he was familiar. See, for instance, his account of the Manichæan heresy "de duplici terrâ, de regno lucis et regno tenebrarum" (*Opera*, 1700, viii. 484, c; *vide ibid.*, i. 693, 717; x. 893, *d.* etc.).]

3. [Conan the Jester, a character in the Irish ballads, was "a kind of Thersites, but brave and daring even to rashness. He had made a vow that he would never take a blow without returning it; and having . . . descended to the infernal regions, he received a cuff from the arch-fiend, which he instantly returned, using the expression in the text ('blow for blow')." Sometimes the proverb is worded thus: "'Claw for claw, and the devil take the shortest nails,' as Conan said to the devil."—*Waverley Novels*, 1829 (notes to chap. xxii. of *Waverley*), i. 241, note 1; see, too, *ibid.*, p. 229.]

4. [The full title of Warburton's book runs thus: *The Divine*

whether satisfactory or not, no better has yet been assigned. I have therefore supposed it new to Cain, without, I hope, any perversion of Holy Writ.

With regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a clergyman upon the same subjects; but I have done what I could to restrain him within the bounds of spiritual politeness. If he disclaims having tempted Eve in the shape of the Serpent, it is only because the book of Genesis has not the most distant allusion to anything of the kind, but merely to the Serpent in his serpentine capacity.

*Note.*—The reader will perceive that the author has partly adopted in this poem the notion of Cuvier,<sup>1</sup> that the world had been destroyed several times before the creation of man. This speculation, derived from the different strata and the bones of enormous and unknown animals found in them, is not contrary to the Mosaic account, but rather confirms it; as no human bones have yet been discovered in those strata, although those of many known animals are found near the remains of the unknown. The assertion of Lucifer, that the pre-Adamite world was also peopled by rational beings much more intelligent than man, and proportionably powerful to the mammoth, etc., etc., is, of course, a poetical fiction to help him to make out his case.

I ought to add, that there is a "tramelogedia" of

*Legation of Moses Demonstrated on the Principles of a Religious Deist; from the omission of the Doctrine of a Future State of Reward and Punishment in the Jewish Dispensation.* (See, more particularly (ed. 1741), Vol. II. pt. ii. bk. v. sect. 5, pp. 449-461, and bk. vi. pp. 569-678.) Compare the following passage from *Dieu et les Hommes* (*Euvres, etc.*, de Voltaire, 1837, vi. 236, chap. xx.): "Notre Warburton s'est épuisé à ramasser dans son fatras de la Divine légation, toutes les preuves que l'auteur du *Pentateuque*, n'a jamais parlé d'une vie à venir, et il n'a pas eu grande peine; mais il en tire une plaisante conclusion, et digne d'un esprit aussi faux que le sien."

1. [See *Recherches sur les Ossements Fossiles*, par M. le Bon G. Cuvier, Paris, 1821, i., "Discours Préliminaire," pp. iv., vii.; and for the thesis, "Il n'y a point d'os humaines fossiles," see p. lxiv.; see, too, Cuvier's *Discours sur les révolutions de la surface du globe*, ed. 1825, p. 282: "Si l'on peut en juger par les differens ordres d'animaux dont on y trouve les dépouilles, ils avaient peut-être subi jusqu'à deux ou trois irrupsions de la mer." It is curious to note that Moore thought that Cuvier's book was "a most desolating one in the conclusions to which it may lead some minds" (*Life*, p. 554).]

Alfieri, called "Abele."<sup>1</sup> I have never read that, nor any other of the posthumous works of the writer, except his Life.

RAVENNA, Sept. 20, 1821.

1. [Alfieri's *Abele* was included in his *Opere inedite*, published by the Countess of Albany and the Abbé Calma in 1804.

"In a long Preface . . . dated April 25, 1796, Alfieri gives a curious account of the reasons which induced him to call it . . . 'Tramelogedy.' He says that *Abel* is neither a tragedy, a comedy, a drama, a tragicomedy, nor a Greek tragedy, which last would, he thinks, be correctly described as melo-tragedy. Opera-tragedy would, in his opinion, be a fitting name for it; but he prefers interpolating the word 'melo' into the middle of the word 'tragedy,' so as not to spoil the ending, although by so doing he has cut in two . . . the root of the word—*τραγος*."—*The Tragedies of Vittorio Alfieri*, edited by E. A. Bowring, C.B., 1876, ii. 472.

There is no resemblance whatever between Byron's *Cain* and Alfieri's *Abele*.]

T

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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MEN.

ADAM.

CAIN.

ABEL.

SPIRITS.

ANGEL OF THE LORD.

LUCIFER.

WOMEN.

EVE.

ADAH.

ZILLAH.

# CAIN:

## A MYSTERY.

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### ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Land without Paradise.—Time, Sunrise.*

ADAM, EVE, CAIN, ABEL, ADAH, ZILLAH, *offering a Sacrifice.*

*Adam.* GOD, the Eternal! Infinite! All-wise!—  
Who out of darkness on the deep didst make  
Light on the waters with a word—All Hail!  
Jehovah! with returning light—All Hail!

*Eve.* God! who didst name the day, and separate  
Morning from night, till then divided never—  
Who didst divide the wave from wave, and call  
Part of thy work the firmament—All Hail!

*Abel.* God! who didst call the elements into  
Earth, ocean, air and fire—and with the day 10  
And night, and worlds which these illuminate,  
Or shadow, madest beings to enjoy them,  
And love both them and thee—All Hail! All Hail!

*Adah.* God! the Eternal parent of all things!  
Who didst create these best and beauteous beings,  
To be belovéd, more than all, save thee—  
Let me love thee and them:—All Hail! All Hail!

*Zillah.* Oh, God! who loving, making, blessing all,  
Yet didst permit the Serpent to creep in,  
And drive my father forth from Paradise, 20

Keep us from further evil :—Hail ! All Hail !

*Adam.* Son Cain ! my first-born—wherefore art thou silent ?

*Cain.* Why should I speak ?

*Adam.* To pray.

*Cain.* Have ye not prayed ?

*Adam.* We have, most fervently.

*Cain.* And loudly : I

Have heard you.

*Adam.* So will God, I trust.

*Abel.* Amen !

*Adam.* But thou my eldest born ? art silent still ?

*Cain.* 'Tis better I should be so.

*Adam.* Wherefore so ?

*Cain.* I have nought to ask.

*Adam.* Nor aught to thank for ?

*Cain.* No.

*Adam.* Dost thou not *live* ?

*Cain.* Must I not die ?

*Eve.* Alas !

The fruit of our forbidden tree begins  
To fall. 30

*Adam.* And we must gather it again.

Oh God ! why didst thou plant the tree of knowledge ?

*Cain.* And wherefore plucked ye not the tree of life ?  
Ye might have then defied him.

*Adam.* Oh ! my son,

Blaspheme not : these are Serpent's words.

*Cain.* Why not ?

The snake spoke *truth* ; it *was* the Tree of Knowledge ;  
It *was* the Tree of Life : knowledge is good,  
And Life is good ; and how can both be evil ?

*Eve.* My boy ! thou speakest as I spoke in sin,  
Before thy birth : let me not see renewed 40  
My misery in thine. I have repented.

Let me not see my offspring fall into  
The snares beyond the walls of Paradise,  
Which even in Paradise destroyed his parents.  
Content thee with what *is*. Had we been so,  
Thou now hadst been contented.—Oh, my son !

*Adam.* Our orisons completed, let us hence,

Each to his task of toil—not heavy, though  
Needful: the earth is young, and yields us kindly  
Her fruits with little labour.

*Eve.* Cain—my son— 50  
Behold thy father cheerful and resigned—  
And do as he doth. [*Exeunt ADAM and EVE.*]

*Zillah.* Wilt thou not, my brother?

*Abel.* Why wilt thou wear this gloom upon thy brow,  
Which can avail thee nothing, save to rouse  
The Eternal anger?

*Adah.* My beloved Cain  
Wilt thou frown even on me?

*Cain.* No, Adah! no;  
I fain would be alone a little while.  
Abel, I'm sick at heart; but it will pass;  
Precede me, brother—I will follow shortly.  
And you, too, sisters, tarry not behind; 60  
Your gentleness must not be harshly met:  
I'll follow you anon.

*Adah.* If not, I will  
Return to seek you here.

*Abel.* The peace of God  
Be on your spirit, brother!

[*Exeunt ABEL, ZILLAH, and ADAM.*]  
*Cain (solus).* And this is

Life?—Toil! and wherefore should I toil?—because  
My father could not keep his place in Eden?  
What had I done in this?—I was unborn:  
I sought not to be born; nor love the state  
To which that birth has brought me. Why did he  
Yield to the Serpent and the woman? or 70  
Yielding—why suffer? What was there in this?  
The tree was planted, and why not for him?  
If not, why place him near it, where it grew  
The fairest in the centre? They have but  
One answer to all questions, "'Twas *his* will,  
And *he* is good." How know I that? Because  
He is all-powerful, must all-good, too, follow?  
I judge but by the fruits—and they are bitter—  
Which I must feed on for a fault not mine.  
Whom have we here?—A shape like to the angels 80



Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect  
 Of spiritual essence : why do I quake ?  
 Why should I fear him more than other spirits,  
 Whom I see daily wave their fiery swords  
 Before the gates round which I linger oft,  
 In Twilight's hour, to catch a glimpse of those  
 Gardens which are my just inheritance,  
 Ere the night closes o'er the inhibited walls  
 And the immortal trees which overtop  
 The Cherubim-defended battlements ? 90  
 If I shrink not from these, the fire-armed angels,  
 Why should I quail from him who now approaches ?  
 Yet—he seems mightier far than them, nor less  
 Beauteous, and yet not all as beautiful  
 As he hath been, and might be : sorrow seems  
 Half of his immortality.<sup>1</sup> And is it  
 So ? and can aught grieve save Humanity ?  
 He cometh.

*Enter LUCIFER.*

*Lucifer.* Mortal !

*Cain.* Spirit, who art thou ?

*Lucifer.* Master of spirits.

*Cain.* And being so, canst thou  
 Leave them, and walk with dust ?

*Lucifer.* I know the thoughts 100  
 Of dust, and feel for it, and with you.

*Cain.* How !  
 You know my thoughts ?

*Lucifer.* They are the thoughts of all  
 Worthy of thought ;—'tis your immortal part<sup>2</sup>

1. [Compare—

“ . . . his form had not yet lost  
 All her original brightness, nor appears  
 Less than Arch-angel ruined, and the excess  
 Of glory obscure.”

*Paradise Lost*, i. 591-593.

Compare, too—

“ . . . but his face  
 Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care  
 Sat on his faded cheek.”

*Ibid.*, i. 600-602.]

2. [According to the Manichæans, the divinely created and immortal

Which speaks within you.

*Cain.* What immortal part ?  
This has not been revealed : the Tree of Life  
Was withheld from us by my father's folly,  
While that of Knowledge, by my mother's haste,  
Was plucked too soon ; and all the fruit is Death !

*Lucifer.* They have deceived thee ; thou shalt live.

*Cain.* I live,  
But live to die ; and, living, see no thing 110  
To make death hateful, save an innate clinging,  
A loathsome, and yet all invincible  
Instinct of life, which I abhor, as I  
Despise myself, yet cannot overcome—  
And so I live. Would I had never lived !

*Lucifer.* Thou livest—and must live for ever. Think  
not  
The Earth, which is thine outward cov'ring, is  
Existence—it will cease—and thou wilt be—  
No less than thou art now.

*Cain.* No less ! and why  
No more ?

*Lucifer.* It may be thou shalt be as we. 120

*Cain.* And ye ?

*Lucifer.* Are everlasting.

*Cain.* Are ye happy ?

*Lucifer.* We are mighty.

*Cain.* Are ye happy ?

*Lucifer.* No : art thou ?

*Cain.* How should I be so ? Look on me !

*Lucifer.* Poor clay !  
And thou pretendest to be wretched ! Thou !

*Cain.* I am :—and thou, with all thy might, what art  
thou ?

*Lucifer.* One who aspired to be what made thee, and  
Would not have made thee what thou art.

*Cain.* Ah !  
Thou look'st almost a god ; and——

*Lucifer.* I am none :  
And having failed to be one, would be nought

soul is imprisoned in an alien and evil body. There can be no harmony  
between soul and body.]

Save what I am. He conquered ; let him reign ! 130

*Cain.* Who ?

*Lucifer.* Thy Sire's maker—and the Earth's.

*Cain.* And Heaven's,

And all that in them is. So I have heard

His Seraphs sing ; and so my father saith.

*Lucifer.* They say—what they must sing and say, on  
pain

Of being that which I am,—and thou art—

Of spirits and of men.

*Cain.* And what is that ?

*Lucifer.* Souls who dare use their immortality—

Souls who dare look the Omnipotent tyrant in

His everlasting face, and tell him that

His evil is not good ! If he has made, 140

As he saith—which I know not, nor believe—

But, if he made us—he cannot unmake :

We are immortal !—nay, he'd *have* us so,

That he may torture :—let him ! He is great—

But, in his greatness, is no happier than

We in our conflict ! Goodness would not make

Evil ; and what else hath he made ? But let him

Sit on his vast and solitary throne—

Creating worlds, to make eternity

Less burthensome to his immense existence 150

And unparticipated solitude ;<sup>1</sup>

Let him crowd orb on orb : he is alone

Indefinite, Indissoluble Tyrant ;

Could he but crush himself, 'twere the best boon

He ever granted : but let him reign on !

And multiply himself in misery !

Spirits and Men, at least we sympathise—

And, suffering in concert, make our pangs

1. [Compare—

“ Let him unite above

Star upon star, moon, Sun ;

And let his God-head toil

To re-adorn and re-illumine his Heaven,

Since in the end derision

Shall prove his works and all his efforts vain.”

*Adam, a Sacred Drama*, by Giovanni Battista Andreini ;

Cowper's *Milton*, 1810, iii. 24, sqq.]

Innumerable, more endurable,  
 By the unbounded sympathy of all 160  
 With all ! But *He* ! so wretched in his height,  
 So restless in his wretchedness, must still  
 Create, and re-create—perhaps he'll make <sup>1</sup>  
 One day a Son unto himself—as he  
 Gave you a father—and if he so doth,  
 Mark me ! that Son will be a sacrifice !

*Cain.* Thou speak'st to me of things which long have  
 swum

In visions through my thought : I never could  
 Reconcile what I saw with what I heard.  
 My father and my mother talk to me 170  
 Of serpents, and of fruits and trees : I see  
 The gates of what they call their Paradise  
 Guarded by fiery-sworded Cherubim,  
 Which shut them out—and me : I feel the weight  
 Of daily toil, and constant thought : I look  
 Around a world where I seem nothing, with  
 Thoughts which arise within me, as if they  
 Could master all things—but I thought alone  
 This misery was *mine*. My father is  
 Tamed down ; my mother has forgot the mind 180  
 Which made her thirst for knowledge at the risk  
 Of an eternal curse ; my brother is  
 A watching shepherd boy,<sup>2</sup> who offers up  
 The firstlings of the flock to him who bids  
 The earth yield nothing to us without sweat ;<sup>1</sup>  
 My sister Zillah sings an earlier hymn  
 Than the birds' matins ; and my Adah—my  
 Own and beloved—she, too, understands not  
 The mind which overwhelms me : never till

i. *A drudging husbandman who offers up  
 The first fruits of the earth to him who made  
 That earth —.—[MS. M. erased.]*

1. [Lines 163-166 ("perhaps" . . . "sacrifice"), which appear in the MS., were omitted from the text in the first and all subsequent editions. In the edition of 1832, etc. (xiv. 27), they are printed as a variant in a footnote. The present text follows the MS.]

2. [According to the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, the word "Abel" signifies "shepherd" or "herdman." The Massorites give "breath," or "vanity," as an equivalent.]

Now met I aught to sympathise with me. 190  
 'Tis well—I rather would consort with spirits.

*Lucifer.* And hadst thou not been fit by thine own soul  
 For such companionship, I would not now  
 Have stood before thee as I am : a serpent  
 Had been enough to charm ye, as before.<sup>1</sup>

*Cain.* Ah ! didst *thou* tempt my mother ?

*Lucifer.* I tempt none,  
 Save with the truth : was not the Tree, the Tree  
 Of Knowledge ? and was not the Tree of Life  
 Still fruitful ? Did I bid her pluck them not ?  
 Did I plant things prohibited within 200

The reach of beings innocent, and curious  
 By their own innocence ? I would have made ye  
 Gods ; and even He who thrust ye forth, so thrust ye  
 Because “ ye should not eat the fruits of life,  
 “ And become gods as we.” Were those his words ?

*Cain.* They were, as I have heard from those who  
 heard them,  
 In thunder.

*Lucifer.* Then who was the Demon ? He  
 Who would not let ye live, or he who would  
 Have made ye live for ever, in the joy  
 And power of Knowledge ?

*Cain.* Would they had snatched both 210  
 The fruits, or neither !

*Lucifer.* One is yours already,  
 The other may be still.

*Cain.* How so ?

*Lucifer.* By being  
 Yourselves, in your resistance. Nothing can  
 Quench the mind, if the mind will be itself  
 And centre of surrounding things—'tis made  
 To sway.

*Cain.* But didst thou tempt my parents ?

*Lucifer.* I ?  
 Poor clay—what should I tempt them for, or how ?

*Cain.* They say the Serpent was a spirit.

*Lucifer.* Who

1. *Have stood before thee as I am ; but chosen  
 The serpent's charming symbol.*—[*M.S. M. erased.*]

Saith that? It is not written so on high :  
The proud One will not so far falsify, 220  
Though man's vast fears and little vanity  
Would make him cast upon the spiritual nature  
His own low failing. The snake *was* the snake—  
No more ;<sup>1</sup> and yet not less than those he tempted,  
In nature being earth also—*more* in *wisdom*,  
Since he could overcome them, and foreknew  
The knowledge fatal to their narrow joys.  
Think'st thou I'd take the shape of things that die ?

*Cain.* But the thing had a demon ?

*Lucifer.*

He but woke one

In those he spake to with his forky tongue. 230  
I tell thee that the Serpent was no more  
Than a mere serpent : ask the Cherubim  
Who guard the tempting tree. When thousand ages  
Have rolled o'er your dead ashes, and your seed's,  
The seed of the then world may thus array  
Their earliest fault in fable, and attribute  
To me a shape I scorn, as I scorn all  
That bows to him, who made things but to bend  
Before his sullen, sole eternity ;  
But we, who see the truth, must speak it. Thy 240  
Fond parents listened to a creeping thing,  
And fell. For what should spirits tempt them ? What  
Was there to envy in the narrow bounds  
Of Paradise, that spirits who pervade  
Space—but I speak to thee of what thou know'st not,  
With all thy Tree of Knowledge.

*Cain.* But thou canst not  
Speak aught of Knowledge which I would not know,  
And do not thirst to know, and bear a mind  
To know.

*Lucifer.* And heart to look on ?

*Cain.*

Be it proved.

*Lucifer.* Darest thou look on Death ?

*Cain.*

He has not yet 250

Been seen.

*Lucifer.* But must be undergone.

*Cain.*

My father

1. [*Vide ante*, "Preface," p. 208.]

Says he is something dreadful, and my mother  
Weeps when he's named; and Abel lifts his eyes  
To Heaven, and Zillah casts hers to the earth,  
And sighs a prayer; and Adah looks on me,  
And speaks not.

*Lucifer.* And thou?

*Cain.* Thoughts unspeakable  
Crowd in my breast to burning, when I hear  
Of this almighty Death, who is, it seems,  
Inevitable. Could I wrestle with him?  
I wrestled with the lion, when a boy, 260  
In play, till he ran roaring from my gripe.

*Lucifer.* It has no shape; but will absorb all things  
That bear the form of earth-born being.

*Cain.* Ah!  
I thought it was a being: who could do  
Such evil things to beings save a being?

*Lucifer.* Ask the Destroyer.

*Cain.* Who?

*Lucifer.* The Maker—Call him  
Which name thou wilt: he makes but to destroy.

*Cain.* I knew not that, yet thought it, since I heard  
Of Death: although I know not what it is—  
Yet it seems horrible. I have looked out 270  
In the vast desolate night in search of him;  
And when I saw gigantic shadows in  
The umbrage of the walls of Eden, chequered  
By the far-flashing of the Cherubs' swords,  
I watched for what I thought his coming; for  
With fear rose longing in my heart to know  
What 'twas which shook us all—but nothing came.  
And then I turned my weary eyes from off  
Our native and forbidden Paradise,  
Up to the lights above us, in the azure, 280  
Which are so beautiful: shall they, too, die?

*Lucifer.* Perhaps—but long outlive both thine and  
thee.

*Cain.* I'm glad of that: I would not have them die—  
They are so lovely. What is Death? I fear,  
I feel, it is a dreadful thing; but what,  
I cannot compass: 'tis denounced against us,

Both them who sinned and sinned not, as an ill—  
What ill?

*Lucifer.* To be resolved into the earth.

*Cain.* But shall I know it?

*Lucifer.* As I know not death,  
I cannot answer.<sup>1</sup>

*Cain.* Were I quiet earth, 290  
That were no evil: would I ne'er had been  
Aught else but dust!

*Lucifer.* That is a *grovelling* wish,  
Less than thy father's—for he wished to know!

*Cain.* But not to live—or wherefore plucked he not  
The Life-tree?

*Lucifer.* He was hindered.

*Cain.* Deadly error!  
Not to snatch first that fruit:—but ere he plucked  
The knowledge, he was ignorant of Death.  
Alas! I scarcely now know what it is,  
And yet I fear it—fear I know not what!

*Lucifer.* And I, who know all things, fear nothing;  
see 300  
What is true knowledge.

*Cain.* Wilt thou teach me all?

*Lucifer.* Aye, upon one condition.

*Cain.* Name it.

*Lucifer.* That  
Thou dost fall down and worship me—thy Lord.

*Cain.* Thou art not the Lord my father worships.

*Lucifer.* No.

*Cain.* His equal?

*Lucifer.* No;—I have nought in common with him!  
Nor would: I would be aught above—beneath—  
Aught save a sharer or a servant of  
His power. I dwell apart; but I am great:—  
Many there are who worship me, and more  
Who shall—be thou amongst the first.

1. [Compare—

“If, as thou sayst thine essence be as ours,  
We have replied in telling thee, the thing  
Mortals call Death hath nought to do with us.”

*Manfred*, act i. sc. 1, lines 161–163, *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 90.]



*Cain.* I never 310  
As yet have bowed unto my father's God.  
Although my brother Abel oft implores  
That I would join with him in sacrifice :—  
Why should I bow to thee?

*Lucifer.* Hast thou ne'er bowed  
To him?

*Cain.* Have I not said it?—need I say it?  
Could not thy mighty knowledge teach thee that?

*Lucifer.* He who bows not to him has bowed to me.<sup>1</sup>

*Cain.* But I will bend to neither.

*Lucifer.* Ne'er the less,  
Thou art my worshipper; not worshipping  
Him makes thee mine the same.

*Cain.* And what is that? 320

*Lucifer.* Thou'lt know here—and hereafter.

*Cain.* Let me but  
Be taught the mystery of my being.

*Lucifer.* Follow  
Where I will lead thee.

*Cain.* But I must retire  
To till the earth—for I had promised——

*Lucifer.* What?

*Cain.* To cull some first-fruits.

*Lucifer.* Why?

*Cain.* To offer up  
With Abel on an altar.

*Lucifer.* Said'st thou not  
Thou ne'er hadst bent to him who made thee?

*Cain.* Yes—  
But Abel's earnest prayer has wrought upon me;

The offering is more his than mine—and Adah——

*Lucifer.* Why dost thou hesitate?

*Cain.* She is my sister, 330

1. [Dr. Arnold, speaking of *Cain*, used to say, "There is something to me almost awful in meeting suddenly, in the works of such a man, so great and solemn a truth as is expressed in that speech of Lucifer, "He who bows not to God hath bowed to me" (Stanley's *Life of Arnold*, ed. 1887, i. 263, *note*). It may be awful, but it is not strange. Byron was seldom at a loss for a text, and must have been familiar with the words, "He that is not with Me is against Me." Moreover, he was a man of genius!]

Born on the same day, of the same womb ; and  
 She wrung from me, with tears, this promise ; and  
 Rather than see her weep, I would, methinks,  
 Bear all—and worship aught.

*Lucifer.*

Then follow me !

*Cain.* I will.

*Enter ADAH.*

*Adah.* My brother, I have come for thee ;  
 It is our hour of rest and joy—and we  
 Have less without thee. Thou hast laboured not  
 This morn ; but I have done thy task : the fruits  
 Are ripe, and glowing as the light which ripens :  
 Come away.

*Cain.* Seest thou not ?

*Adah.* I see an angel ; 340  
 We have seen many : will he share our hour  
 Of rest ?—he is welcome.

*Cain.* But he is not like  
 The angels we have seen.

*Adah.* Are there, then, others ?  
 But he is welcome, as they were : they deigned  
 To be our guests—will he ?

*Cain (to Lucifer).* Wilt thou ?

*Lucifer.* I ask  
 Thee to be mine.

*Cain.* I must away with him.

*Adah.* And leave us ?

*Cain.* Aye.

*Adah.* And me ?

*Cain.* Belovéd Adah !

*Adah.* Let me go with thee.

*Lucifer.* No, she must not.

*Adah.* Who  
 Art thou that steppest between heart and heart ?

*Cain.* He is a God.

*Adah.* How know'st thou ?

*Cain.* He speaks like  
 A God.

*Adah.* So did the Serpent, and it lied. 351

*Lucifer.* Thou errest, Adah!—was not the Tree  
that  
Of Knowledge?

*Adah.* Aye—to our eternal sorrow.

*Lucifer.* And yet that grief is knowledge—so he lied  
not:

And if he did betray you, 'twas with Truth;  
And Truth in its own essence cannot be  
But good.

*Adah.* But all we know of it has gathered  
Evil on ill; expulsion from our home,  
And dread, and toil, and sweat, and heaviness;  
Remorse of that which was—and hope of that 360  
Which cometh not. Cain! walk not with this Spirit.  
Bear with what we have borne, and love me—I  
Love thee.

*Lucifer.* More than thy mother, and thy sire?

*Adah.* I do. Is that a sin, too?

*Lucifer.* No, not yet;  
It one day will be in your children.

*Adah.* What!  
Must not my daughter love her brother Enoch?

*Lucifer.* Not as thou lovest Cain.

*Adah.* Oh, my God!  
Shall they not love and bring forth things that love  
Out of their love? have they not drawn their milk  
Out of this bosom? was not he, their father, 370  
Born of the same sole womb,<sup>1</sup> in the same hour  
With me? did we not love each other? and  
In multiplying our being multiply  
Things which will love each other as we love  
Them?—And as I love thee, my Cain! go not  
Forth with this spirit; he is not of ours.

*Lucifer.* The sin I speak of is not of my making,  
And cannot be a sin in you—whate'er  
It seem in those who will replace ye in

1. ["The most common opinion is that a son and daughter were born together; and they go so far as to tell us the very name of the daughters. Cain's twin sister was called Calmana (see, too, *Le Mystère du Viel Testament*, lines 1883-1926, ed. 1878), or Caimana, or Debora, or Azzrum; that of Abel was named Delbora or Awina."—*Bayle's Dictionary*, 1735, ii. 854, art. "Eve," D.]

Mortality.<sup>1</sup>

*Adah.* What is the sin which is not  
Sin in itself? Can circumstance make sin  
Or virtue?—if it doth, we are the slaves  
Of—— 380

*Lucifer.* Higher things than ye are slaves : and higher  
Than them or ye would be so, did they not  
Prefer an independency of torture  
To the smooth agonies of adulation,  
In hymns and harpings, and self-seeking prayers,  
To that which is omnipotent, because  
It is omnipotent, and not from love,  
But terror and self-hope.

*Adah.* Omnipotence 390  
Must be all goodness.

*Lucifer.* Was it so in Eden?

*Adah.* Fiend ! tempt me not with beauty ; thou art  
fairer  
Than was the Serpent, and as false.

*Lucifer.* As true.  
Ask Eve, your mother : bears she not the knowledge  
Of good and evil ?

*Adah.* Oh, my mother ! thou  
Hast plucked a fruit more fatal to thine offspring  
Than to thyself ; thou at the least hast passed  
Thy youth in Paradise, in innocent  
And happy intercourse with happy spirits :  
But we, thy children, ignorant of Eden, 400  
Are girt about by demons, who assume  
The words of God, and tempt us with our own  
Dissatisfied and curious thoughts—as thou  
Wert worked on by the snake, in thy most flushed  
And heedless, harmless wantonness of bliss.  
I cannot answer this immortal thing  
Which stands before me ; I cannot abhor him ;  
I look upon him with a pleasing fear,  
And yet I fly not from him : in his eye  
There is a fastening attraction which 410

1. [It is impossible not to be struck with the resemblance between many of these passages and others in *Manfred*, e.g. act ii. sc. 1, lines 24-28, *Poetical Works*, 1501, iv. 99, note 1.]

Fixes my fluttering eyes on his ; my heart  
Beats quick ; he awes me, and yet draws me near,  
Nearer and nearer :—Cain—Cain—save me from him !

*Cain.* What dreads my Adah ? This is no ill spirit.

*Adah.* He is not God—nor God's : I have beheld  
The Cherubs and the Seraphs ; he looks not  
Like them.

*Cain.* But there are spirits loftier still—  
The archangels.

*Lucifer.* And still loftier than the archangels.

*Adah.* Aye—but not blessed.

*Lucifer.* If the blessedness  
Consists in slavery—no.

*Adah.* I have heard it said, 420  
The Seraphs *love most*—Cherubim *know most*—<sup>1</sup>  
And this should be a Cherub—since he loves not.

*Lucifer.* And if the higher knowledge quenches love,  
What must *he be* you cannot love when known ?<sup>2</sup>  
Since the all-knowing Cherubim love least,  
The Seraphs' love can be but ignorance :  
That they are not compatible, the doom  
Of thy fond parents, for their daring, proves.  
Choose betwixt Love and Knowledge—since there is  
No other choice : your sire hath chosen already : 430  
His worship is but fear.

*Adah.* Oh, Cain ! choose Love.

*Cain.* For thee, my Adah, I choose not—It was  
Born with me—but I love nought else.

*Adah.* Our parents ?

*Cain.* Did they love us when they snatched from the  
Tree  
That which hath driven us all from Paradise ?

*Adah.* We were not born then—and if we had been,  
Should we not love them—and our children, Cain ?

i. *What can he be who places love in ignorance ?*—[MS. M.]

1. ["One of the second order of angels of the Dionysian hierarchy, reputed to excel specially in knowledge (as the seraphim in love). See Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, i. 28 : 'The first place is given to the Angels of love, which are termed Seraphim, the second to the Angels of light, which are termed Cherubim.'"]—*N. Eng. Dict.*, art. "Cherub."]

*Cain.* My little Enoch ! and his lisping sister !  
Could I but deem them happy, I would half  
Forget—but it can never be forgotten 440  
Through thrice a thousand generations ! never  
Shall men love the remembrance of the man  
Who sowed the seed of evil and mankind  
In the same hour ! They plucked the tree of science  
And sin—and, not content with their own sorrow,  
Begot *me—thee*—and all the few that are,  
And all the unnumbered and innumerable  
Multitudes, millions, myriads, which may be,  
To inherit agonies accumulated  
By ages !—and *I* must be sire of such things ! 450  
Thy beauty and thy love—my love and joy,  
The rapturous moment and the placid hour,  
All we love in our children and each other,  
But lead them and ourselves through many years  
Of sin and pain—or few, but still of sorrow,  
Interchecked with an instant of brief pleasure,  
To Death—the unknown ! Methinks the Tree of Know-  
ledge

Hath not fulfilled its promise :—if they sinned,  
At least they ought to have known all things that are  
Of knowledge—and the mystery of Death.<sup>4</sup> 460  
What do they know ?—that they are miserable.  
What need of snakes and fruits to teach us that ?

*Adah.* I am not wretched, Cain, and if thou  
Wert happy——

*Cain.* Be thou happy, then, alone—  
I will have nought to do with happiness,  
Which humbles me and mine.

*Adah.* Alone I could not,  
Nor *would* be happy ; but with those around us  
I think I could be so, despite of Death,  
Which, as I know it not, I dread not, though  
It seems an awful shadow—if I may 470  
Judge from what I have heard.

*Lucifer.* And thou couldst not  
*Alone*, thou say'st, be happy ?

*Adah.* Alone ! Oh, my God !

i. *But it was a lie no doubt.*—[MS. M. erased.]

Who could be happy and alone, or good?  
 To me my solitude seems sin ; unless  
 When I think how soon I shall see my brother,  
 His brother, and our children, and our parents.

*Lucifer.* Yet thy God is alone ; and is he happy ?  
 Lonely, and good ?

*Adah.* He is not so ; he hath  
 The angels and the mortals to make happy,  
 And thus becomes so in diffusing joy. 480  
 What else can joy be, but the spreading joy ?<sup>i</sup>

*Lucifer.* Ask of your sire, the exile fresh from Eden ;  
 Or of his first-born son : ask your own heart ;  
 It is not tranquil.

*Adah.* Alas ! no ! and you—  
 Are you of Heaven ?

*Lucifer.* If I am not, enquire  
 The cause of this all-spreading happiness  
 (Which you proclaim) of the all-great and good  
 Maker of life and living things ; it is  
 His secret, and he keeps it. *We* must bear,  
 And some of us resist—and both in vain, 490  
 His Seraphs say : but it is worth the trial,  
 Since better may not be without : there is  
 A wisdom in the spirit, which directs  
 To right, as in the dim blue air the eye  
 Of you, young mortals, lights at once upon  
 The star which watches, welcoming the morn.

*Adah.* It is a beautiful star ; I love it for  
 Its beauty.

*Lucifer.* And why not adore ?

*Adah.* Our father  
 Adores the Invisible only.

*Lucifer.* But the symbols  
 Of the Invisible are the loveliest 500  
 Of what is visible ; and yon bright star  
 Is leader of the host of Heaven.

*Adah.* Our father  
 Saith that he has beheld the God himself  
 Who made him and our mother.

*Lucifer.* Hast *thou* seen him ?

i. *What else can be joy ?*—.[MS. M.]

*Adah.* Yes—in his works.

*Lucifer.*

But in his being?

*Adah.*

No—

Save in my father, who is God's own image ;  
Or in his angels, who are like to thee—  
And brighter, yet less beautiful and powerful  
In seeming : as the silent sunny noon,  
All light, they look upon us ; but thou seem'st  
Like an ethereal night,<sup>1</sup> where long white clouds  
Streak the deep purple, and unnumbered stars  
Spangle the wonderful mysterious vault  
With things that look as if they would be suns ;  
So beautiful, unnumbered, and endearing,  
Not dazzling, and yet drawing us to them,  
They fill my eyes with tears, and so dost thou.  
Thou seem'st unhappy : do not make us so,  
And I will weep for thee.

510

*Lucifer.*

Alas ! those tears !

Couldst thou but know what oceans will be shed——

520

*Adah.* By me ?

*Lucifer.*

By all.

*Adah.*

What all ?

*Lucifer.*

The million millions—

The myriad myriads—the all-peopled earth—  
The unpeopled earth—and the o'er-peopled Hell,  
Of which thy bosom is the germ.

*Adah.*

O Cain !

This spirit curseth us.

*Cain.*

Let him say on ;

Him will I follow.

*Adah.*

Whither ?

*Lucifer.*

To a place

Whence he shall come back to thee in an hour ;  
But in that hour see things of many days.

*Adah.* How can that be ?

*Lucifer.*

Did not your Maker make

Out of old worlds this new one in few days ?

530

And cannot I, who aided in this work,

1. [Compare—

“ She walks in Beauty like the night.”

*Hebrew Melodies*, i. 1, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 381.]



Show in an hour what he hath made in many,  
Or hath destroyed in few?

*Cain.*

Lead on.

*Adah.*

Will he,

In sooth, return within an hour?

*Lucifer.*

He shall.

With us acts are exempt from time, and we

Can crowd eternity into an hour,

Or stretch an hour into eternity:

We breathe not by a mortal measurement—

But that 's a mystery. Cain, come on with me.

*Adah.* Will he return?

*Lucifer.*

Aye, woman! he alone 540

Of mortals from that place (the first and last

Who shall return, save ONE), shall come back to  
thee,

To make that silent and expectant world

As populous as this: at present there

Are few inhabitants.

*Adah.*

Where dwellest thou?

*Lucifer.* Throughout all space. Where should I dwell?

Where are

Thy God or Gods—there am I: all things are

Divided with me: Life and Death—and Time—

Eternity—and heaven and earth—and that

Which is not heaven nor earth, but peopled with 550

Those who once peopled or shall people both—

These are my realms! so that I do divide

*His*, and possess a kingdom which is not

*His*.<sup>1</sup> If I were not that which I have said,

Could I stand here? His angels are within

Your vision.

*Adah.*

So they were when the fair Serpent  
Spoke with our mother first.

*Lucifer.*

Cain! thou hast heard.

If thou dost long for knowledge, I can satiate

That thirst; nor ask thee to partake of fruits

Which shall deprive thee of a single good 560

1. [Lucifer was evidently indebted to the Manichæans for his theory of the *duplex terra*—an infernal as well as a celestial kingdom.]

The Conqueror has left thee. Follow me.

*Cain.* Spirit, I have said it.

[*Exeunt LUCIFER and CAIN.*

*Adah* (*follows exclaiming*). Cain! my brother! Cain!

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—*The Abyss of Space.*

*Cain.* I tread on air, and sink not—yet I fear  
To sink.

*Lucifer.* Have faith in me, and thou shalt be  
Borne on the air,<sup>1</sup> of which I am the Prince.

*Cain.* Can I do so without impiety?

*Lucifer.* Believe—and sink not! doubt—and perish!  
thus

Would run the edict of the other God,  
Who names me Demon to his angels; they  
Echo the sound to miserable things,  
Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,  
Worship the *word* which strikes their ear, and deem 10  
Evil or good what is proclaimed to them  
In their abasement. I will have none such:  
Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold  
The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be  
Amerced for doubts beyond thy little life,  
With torture of *my* dooming. There will come  
An hour, when, tossed upon some water-drops,<sup>2</sup>  
A man shall say to a man, "Believe in me,  
And walk the waters;" and the man shall walk  
The billows and be safe. I will not say, 20  
Believe in *me*, as a conditional creed  
To save thee; but fly with me o'er the gulf  
Of space an equal flight, and I will show  
What thou dar'st not deny,—the history  
Of past—and present, and of future worlds.

i. *An hour, when walking on a petty lake.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

ii. ["According to the prince of the power of the air" (*Eph.* ii. 2).]

*Cain.* Oh God ! or Demon ! or whate'er thou art,  
Is yon our earth ?

*Lucifer.* Dost thou not recognise  
The dust which formed your father ?

*Cain.* Can it be ?

Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,<sup>1</sup>  
With an inferior circlet purpler it still,<sup>1</sup> 30  
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night ?  
Is this our Paradise ? Where are its walls,  
And they who guard them ?

*Lucifer.* Point me out the site  
Of Paradise.

*Cain.* How should I ? As we move  
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,  
And as it waxes little, and then less,  
Gathers a halo round it, like the light  
Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I  
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise :  
Methinks they both, as we recede from them, 40  
Appear to join the innumerable stars  
Which are around us ; and, as we move on,  
Increase their myriads.

*Lucifer.* And if there should be  
Worlds greater than thine own—inhabited  
By greater things—and they themselves far more  
In number than the dust of thy dull earth,  
Though multiplied to animated atoms,

- i. *Yon round blue circle swinging in far ether  
With an inferior circlet dimmer still.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

i. [Compare—

"And, fast by, hanging in a golden chain,  
This pendent World, in bigness as a star  
Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon."

*Paradise Lost*, ii. 1051-1053.

Compare, too—

"The magic car moved on.  
Earth's distant orb appeared  
The smallest light that twinkles in the heavens ;  
Whilst round the chariot's way  
Innumerable systems rolled,  
And countless spheres diffused  
An ever-varying glory."  
*Shelley's Queen Mab, Poetical Works*, 1829, p. 106.]

All living—and all doomed to death—and wretched,  
What wouldst thou think?

*Cain.* I should be proud of thought  
Which knew such things.

*Lucifer.* But if that high thought were 50  
Linked to a servile mass of matter—and,  
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,  
And science still beyond them, were chained down  
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,  
All foul and fulsome—and the very best  
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,  
A most enervating and filthy cheat  
To lure thee on to the renewal of  
Fresh souls and bodies,<sup>1</sup> all foredoomed to be  
As frail, and few so happy——

*Cain.* Spirit! I 60  
Know nought of Death, save as a dreadful thing  
Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of  
A hideous heritage I owe to them  
No less than life—a heritage not happy,  
If I may judge, till now. But, Spirit! if  
It be as thou hast said (and I within  
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),  
Here let me die: for to give birth to those  
Who can but suffer many years, and die—  
Methinks is merely propagating Death, 70  
And multiplying murder.

*Lucifer.* Thou canst not  
All die—there is what must survive.

*Cain.* The Other  
Spake not of this unto my father, when  
He shut him forth from Paradise, with death  
Written upon his forehead. But at least  
Let what is mortal of me perish, that  
I may be in the rest as angels are.

*Lucifer.* I am angelic: wouldst thou be as I am?

1. ["Several of the ancient Fathers, too much prejudiced in favour of virginity, have pretended that if Man had persevered in innocence he would not have entered into the carnal commerce of matrimony, and that the propagation of mankind would have been effected quite another way." (See St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, xiv. cap. xxi. ; Bayle's *Dictionary*, art. "Eve," 1735, n. 853, note C.)]

*Cain.* I know not what thou art : I see thy power,  
 And see thou show'st me things beyond *my* power, 80  
 Beyond all power of my born faculties,  
 Although inferior still to my desires  
 And my conceptions.

*Lucifer.* What are they which dwell  
 So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn  
 With worms in clay ?

*Cain.* And what art thou who dwellest  
 So haughtily in spirit, and canst range  
 Nature and immortality—and yet  
 Seem'st sorrowful ?

*Lucifer.* I seem that which I am ;  
 And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou  
 Wouldst be immortal ?

*Cain.* Thou hast said, I must be 90  
 Immortal in despite of me. I knew not  
 This until lately—but since it must be,  
 Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn  
 To anticipate my immortality.

*Lucifer.* Thou didst before I came upon thee.

*Cain.* How ?

*Lucifer.* By suffering.

*Cain.* And must torture be immortal ?

*Lucifer.* We and thy sons will try. But now, behold !  
 Is it not glorious ?

*Cain.* Oh thou beautiful  
 And unimaginable ether ! and  
 Ye multiplying masses of increased 100  
 And still-increasing lights ! what are ye ? what  
 Is this blue wilderness of interminable  
 Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen  
 The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden ?  
 Is your course measured for ye ? Or do ye  
 Sweep on in your unbounded revelry  
 Through an ærial universe of endless  
 Expansion—at which my soul aches to think—  
 Intoxicated with eternity ? <sup>1</sup>

1. [Compare—

“ Below lay stretched the universe !  
 There, far as the remotest line

Oh God ! Oh Gods ! or whatsoe'er ye are ! 110  
How beautiful ye are ! how beautiful  
Your works, or accidents, or whatsoe'er  
They may be ! Let me die, as atoms die,  
(If that they die), or know ye in your might  
And knowledge ! My thoughts are not in this hour  
Unworthy what I see, though my dust is ;  
Spirit ! let me expire, or see them nearer.

*Lucifer.* Art thou not nearer ? look back to thine  
earth !

*Cain.* Where is it ? I see nothing save a mass  
Of most innumerable lights.

*Lucifer.* Look there ! 120

*Cain.* I cannot see it.

*Lucifer.* Yet it sparkles still.

*Cain.* That !—yonder !

*Lucifer.* Yea.

*Cain.* And wilt thou tell me so ?

Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms  
Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks  
In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world  
Which bears them.

*Lucifer.* Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,  
Each bright and sparkling—what dost think of them ?

*Cain.* That they are beautiful in their own sphere,  
And that the night, which makes both beautiful,  
The little shining fire-fly in its flight, 130  
And the immortal star in its great course,  
Must both be guided.

*Lucifer.* But by whom or what ?

*Cain.* Show me.

*Lucifer.* Dar'st thou behold ?

*Cain.* How know I what

I *dare* behold ? As yet, thou hast shown nought  
I dare not gaze on further.

*Lucifer.* On, then, with me.

That bounds imagination's flight,  
Countless and unending orbs  
In many motions intermingled,  
Yet still fulfilled immutably  
Eternal Nature's laws."

Shelley's *Queen Mab*, ii, *ibid.*, p. 107.]

Wouldst thou behold things mortal or immortal ?

*Cain.* Why, what are things ?

*Lucifer.* *Both* partly : but what doth  
Sit next thy heart ?

*Cain.* The things I see.

*Lucifer.* But what  
Sate nearest it ?

*Cain.* The things I have not seen,  
Nor ever shall—the mysteries of Death. 140

*Lucifer.* What, if I show to thee things which have  
died,  
As I have shown thee much which cannot die ?

*Cain.* Do so.

*Lucifer.* Away, then ! on our mighty wings !

*Cain.* Oh ! how we cleave the blue ! The stars fade  
from us !  
The earth ! where is my earth ? Let me look on it,  
For I was made of it.

*Lucifer.* 'Tis now beyond thee,  
Less, in the universe, than thou in it ;  
Yet deem not that thou canst escape it ; thou  
Shalt soon return to earth, and all its dust :  
'Tis part of thy eternity, and mine. 150

*Cain.* Where dost thou lead me ?

*Lucifer.* To what was before thee !  
The phantasm of the world ; of which thy world  
Is but the wreck.

*Cain.* What ! is it not then new ?

*Lucifer.* No more than life is ; and that was ere thou  
Or *I* were, or the things which seem to us  
Greater than either : many things will have  
No end ; and some, which would pretend to have  
Had no beginning, have had one as mean  
As thou ; and mightier things have been extinct  
To make way for much meaner than we can 160  
Surmise ; for *moments* only and the *space*  
Have been and must be all *unchangeable*.  
But changes make not death, except to clay ;  
But thou art clay—and canst but comprehend  
That which was clay, and such thou shalt behold.

*Cain.* Clay—Spirit—what thou wilt—I can survey.

*Lucifer.* Away, then !

*Cain.* But the lights fade from me fast,  
And some till now grew larger as we approached,  
And wore the look of worlds.

*Lucifer.* And such they are.

*Cain.* And Edens in them ?

*Lucifer.* It may be.

*Cain.* And men ? 170

*Lucifer.* Yea, or things higher.

*Cain.* Aye ! and serpents too ?<sup>1</sup>

*Lucifer.* Wouldst thou have men without them ? must  
no reptiles

Breathe, save the erect ones ?

*Cain.* How the lights recede !  
Where fly we ?

*Lucifer.* To the world of phantoms, which  
Are beings past, and shadows still to come.

*Cain.* But it grows dark, and dark—the stars are gone !

*Lucifer.* And yet thou seest.

*Cain.* 'Tis a fearful light !

No sun—no moon—no lights innumerable—  
The very blue of the empurpled night  
Fades to a dreary twilight—yet I see 180  
Huge dusky masses ; but unlike the worlds  
We were approaching, which, begirt with light,  
Seemed full of life even when their atmosphere  
Of light gave way, and showed them taking shapes  
Unequal, of deep valleys and vast mountains ;  
And some emitting sparks, and some displaying  
Enormous liquid plains, and some begirt  
With luminous belts, and floating moons, which took,  
Like them, the features of fair earth :—instead,  
All here seems dark and dreadful.

*Lucifer.* But distinct. 190  
Thou seekest to behold Death, and dead things ?

*Cain.* I seek it not ; but as I know there are  
Such, and that my sire's sin makes him and me,  
And all that we inherit, liable  
To such, I would behold, at once, what I  
Must one day see perforce.

1. *And with serpents too ?*—[MS. M.]



*Lucifer.* Behold !

*Cain.* 'Tis darkness !

*Lucifer.* And so it shall be ever—but we will  
Unfold its gates !

*Cain.* Enormous vapours roll  
Apart—what's this ?

*Lucifer.* Enter !

*Cain.* Can I return ?

*Lucifer.* Return ! be sure : how else should Death be  
peopled ? 200

Its present realm is thin to what it will be,  
Through thee and thine.

*Cain.* The clouds still open wide  
And wider, and make widening circles round us !

*Lucifer.* Advance !

*Cain.* And thou !

*Lucifer.* Fear not—without me thou  
Couldst not have gone beyond thy world. On ! on !

*[They disappear through the clouds.]*

## SCENE II.—*Hades.*

*Enter LUCIFER and CAIN.*

*Cain.* How silent and how vast are these dim worlds !  
For they seem more than one, and yet more peopled  
Than the huge brilliant luminous orbs which swung  
So thickly in the upper air, that I  
Had deemed them rather the bright populace  
Of some all unimaginable Heaven,  
Than things to be inhabited themselves,<sup>i</sup>  
But that on drawing near them I beheld  
Their swelling into palpable immensity  
Of matter, which seemed made for life to dwell on, 10  
Rather than life itself. But here, all is  
So shadowy, and so full of twilight, that  
It speaks of a day past.

*Lucifer.* It is the realm

<sup>i</sup> *Rather than things to be inhabited.*—[MS. M.]

Of Death.—Wouldst have it present?

*Cain.*

Till I know

That which it really is, I cannot answer.

But if it be as I have heard my father

Deal out in his long homilies, 'tis a thing—

Oh God! I dare not think on't! Curséd be

He who invented Life that leads to Death!

Or the dull mass of life, that, being life,

Could not retain, but needs must forfeit it—

20

Even for the innocent!

*Lucifer.*

Dost thou curse thy father?

*Cain.* Curséd he not me in giving me my birth?

Curséd he not me before my birth, in daring

To pluck the fruit forbidden?

*Lucifer.*

Thou say'st well:

The curse is mutual 'twixt thy sire and thee—

But for thy sons and brother?

*Cain.*

Let them share it

With me, their sire and brother! What else is

Bequeathed to me? I leave them my inheritance!

Oh, ye interminable gloomy realms

30

Of swimming shadows and enormous shapes,

Some fully shown, some indistinct, and all

Mighty and melancholy—what are ye?

Live ye, or have ye lived?

*Lucifer.*

Somewhat of both.

*Cain.* Then what is Death?

*Lucifer.*

What? Hath not he who made ye

Said 'tis another life?

*Cain.*

Till now he hath

Said nothing, save that all shall die.

*Lucifer.*

Perhaps

He one day will unfold that further secret.

*Cain.* Happy the day!

*Lucifer.*

Yes; happy! when unfolded,

Through agonies unspeakable, and clogged

40

With agonies eternal, to innumerable

Yet unborn myriads of unconscious atoms,

All to be animated for this only!

*Cain.* What are these mighty phantoms which I see  
Floating around me?—They wear not the form

Of the Intelligences I have seen  
 Round our regretted and unentered Eden ;  
 Nor wear the form of man as I have viewed it  
 In Adam's and in Abel's, and in mine,  
 Nor in my sister-bride's, nor in my children's : 50  
 And yet they have an aspect, which, though not  
 Of men nor angels, looks like something, which,  
 If not the last, rose higher than the first,  
 Haughty, and high, and beautiful, and full  
 Of seeming strength, but of inexplicable  
 Shape ; for I never saw such. They bear not  
 The wing of Seraph, nor the face of man,  
 Nor form of mightiest brute, nor aught that is  
 Now breathing ; mighty yet and beautiful  
 As the most beautiful and mighty which 60  
 Live, and yet so unlike them, that I scarce  
 Can call them living.<sup>1</sup>

*Lucifer.* Yet they lived.

*Cain.* Where ?

*Lucifer.* Where

Thou livest.

*Cain.* When ?

*Lucifer.* On what thou callest earth

They did inhabit.

*Cain.* Adam is the first.

*Lucifer.* Of thine, I grant thee—but too mean to be  
 The last of these.

*Cain.* And what are they ?

*Lucifer.* That which

Thou shalt be.

*Cain.* But what *were* they ?

*Lucifer.* Living, high,

Intelligent, good, great, and glorious things,

As much superior unto all thy sire

Adam could e'er have been in Eden, as

The sixty-thousandth generation shall be,

70

1. ["I have . . . supposed Cain to be shown in the *rational* pre-Adamites, beings endowed with a higher intelligence than man, but totally unlike him in form, and with much greater strength of mind and person. You may suppose the small talk which takes place between him and Lucifer upon these matters is not quite canonical."—Letter to Moore, September 19, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 368.]

In its dull damp degeneracy, to  
Thee and thy son ;—and how weak they are, judge  
By thy own flesh.

*Cain.* Ah me ! and did *they* perish ?

*Lucifer.* Yes, from their earth, as thou wilt fade from  
thine.

*Cain.* But was *mine* theirs ?

*Lucifer.* It was.

*Cain.* But not as now.

It is too little and too lowly to  
Sustain such creatures.

*Lucifer.* True, it was more glorious.

*Cain.* And wherefore did it fall ?

*Lucifer.* Ask him who fells.<sup>1</sup>

*Cain.* But how ?

*Lucifer.* By a most crushing and inexorable  
Destruction and disorder of the elements, 81  
Which struck a world to chaos, as a chaos  
Subsiding has struck out a world : such things,  
Though rare in time, are frequent in eternity.—  
Pass on, and gaze upon the past.

*Cain.* 'Tis awful !

*Lucifer.* And true. Behold these phantoms ! they were  
once  
Material as thou art.

*Cain.* And must I be  
Like them ?

*Lucifer.* Let He<sup>2</sup> who made thee answer that.  
I show thee what thy predecessors are,  
And what they *were* thou feelest, in degree 20  
Inferior as thy petty feelings and  
Thy pettier portion of the immortal part  
Of high intelligence and earthly strength.  
What ye in common have with what they had  
Is Life, and what ye *shall* have—Death : the rest  
Of your poor attributes is such as suits

1. [Compare the "jingle between king and kine," in *Sardanapalus*, act v. sc. 1, lines 483, 484. It is hard to say whether Byron inserted and then omitted to erase these blemishes from negligence and indifference, or whether he regarded them as permissible or even felicitous.]  
2. ["Let He." There is no doubt that Byron wrote, or that he should have written, "Let Him."]

Reptiles engendered out of the subsiding  
Slime of a mighty universe, crushed into  
A scarcely-yet shaped planet, peopled with  
Things whose enjoyment was to be in blindness— 100  
A Paradise of Ignorance, from which  
Knowledge was barred as poison. But behold  
What these superior beings are or were ;  
Or, if it irk thee, turn thee back and till  
The earth, thy task—I'll waft thee there in safety.

*Cain.* No : I'll stay here.

*Lucifer.* How long ?

*Cain.* For ever ! Since  
I must one day return here from the earth,  
I rather would remain ; I am sick of all  
That dust has shown me—let me dwell in shadows.

*Lucifer.* It cannot be : thou now beholdest as 110  
A vision that which is reality.  
To make thyself fit for this dwelling, thou  
Must pass through what the things thou seest have  
passed—

The gates of Death.

*Cain.* By what gate have we entered  
Even now ?

*Lucifer.* By mine ! But, plighted to return,  
My spirit buoys thee up to breathe in regions  
Where all is breathless save thyself. Gaze on ;  
But do not think to dwell here till thine hour  
Is come !

*Cain.* And these, too—can they ne'er repass  
To earth again ?

*Lucifer.* Their earth is gone for ever— 120  
So changed by its convulsion, they would not  
Be conscious to a single present spot  
Of its new scarcely hardened surface—'twas—  
Oh, what a beautiful world it *was* !

*Cain.* And is !  
It is not with the earth, though I must till it,  
I feel at war—but that I may not profit  
By what it bears of beautiful, untailing,  
Nor gratify my thousand swelling thoughts  
With knowledge, nor allay my thousand fears

Of Death and Life.

*Lucifer.* What thy world is, thou see'st, 130  
But canst not comprehend the shadow of  
That which it was.

*Cain.* And those enormous creatures,  
Phantoms inferior in intelligence  
(At least so seeming) to the things we have passed,  
Resembling somewhat the wild habitants  
Of the deep woods of earth, the hugest which  
Roar nightly in the forest, but ten-fold  
In magnitude and terror ; taller than  
The cherub-guarded walls of Eden—with  
Eyes flashing like the fiery swords which fence them—  
And tusks projecting like the trees stripped of 141  
Their bark and branches—what were they ?

*Lucifer.* That which  
The Mammoth is in thy world ;—but these lie  
By myriads underneath its surface.

*Cain.* But  
None on it ?

*Lucifer.* No : for thy frail race to war  
With them would render the curse on it useless—  
'Twould be destroyed so early.

*Cain.* But why war ?

*Lucifer.* You have forgotten the denunciation  
Which drove your race from Eden—war with all things,  
And death to all things, and disease to most things, 150  
And pangs, and bitterness ; these were the fruits  
Of the forbidden tree.

*Cain.* But animals—  
Did they, too, eat of it, that they must die ?

*Lucifer.* Your Maker told ye, *they* were made for you,  
As you for him.—You would not have their doom  
Superior to your own ? Had Adam not  
Fallen, all had stood.

*Cain.* Alas ! the hopeless wretches !  
They too must share my sire's fate, like his sons ;  
Like them, too, without having shared the apple ;  
Like them, too, without the so dear-bought *knowledge* !  
It was a lying tree—for we *know* nothing. 161  
At least it *promised knowledge* at the *price*

Of death—but *knowledge* still : but what *knows* man ?

*Lucifer.* It may be death leads to the *highest* knowledge ;  
And being of all things the sole thing certain,<sup>i</sup>  
At least leads to the *surest* science : therefore  
The Tree was true, though deadly.

*Cain.* These dim realms !  
I see them, but I know them not.

*Lucifer.* Because  
Thy hour is yet afar, and matter cannot  
Comprehend spirit wholly—but 'tis something 170  
To know there are such realms.

*Cain.* We knew already  
That there was Death.

*Lucifer.* But not what was beyond it.  
*Cain.* Nor know I now.

*Lucifer.* Thou knowest that there is  
A state, and many states beyond thine own—  
And this thou knewest not this morn.

*Cain.* But all  
Seems dim and shadowy.

*Lucifer.* Be content ; it will  
Seem clearer to thine immortality.

*Cain.* And yon immeasurable liquid space  
Of glorious azure which floats on beyond us,  
Which looks like water, and which I should deem<sup>ii</sup> 180  
The river which flows out of Paradise  
Past my own dwelling, but that it is bankless  
And boundless, and of an ethereal hue—  
What is it ?

*Lucifer.* There is still some such on earth,  
Although inferior, and thy children shall  
Dwell near it—'tis the phantasm of an Ocean.

*Cain.* 'Tis like another world ; a liquid sun—  
And those inordinate creatures sporting o'er  
Its shining surface ?

*Lucifer.* Are its inhabitants,  
The past Leviathans.

*Cain.* And yon immense 190

i. *And being of all things the sole thing sure.*—[MS. M.]

ii. *Which seems like water and which I should deem.*—[MS. M.]

Serpent, which rears his dripping mane and vasty  
Head, ten times higher than the haughtiest cedar,  
Forth from the abyss, looking as he could coil  
Himself around the orbs we lately looked on—  
Is he not of the kind which basked beneath  
The Tree in Eden?

*Lucifer.* Eve, thy mother, best  
Can tell what shape of serpent tempted her.

*Cain.* This seems too terrible. No doubt the other  
Had more of beauty.

*Lucifer.* Hast thou ne'er beheld him?

*Cain.* Many of the same kind (at least so called)  
But never that precisely, which persuaded 201  
The fatal fruit, nor even of the same aspect.

*Lucifer.* Your father saw him not?

*Cain.* No: 'twas my mother  
Who tempted him—she tempted by the serpent.

*Lucifer.* Good man! whene'er thy wife, or thy sons'  
wives,

Tempt thee or them to aught that 's new or strange,  
Be sure thou seest first who hath tempted *them*!

*Cain.* Thy precept comes too late: there is no more  
For serpents to tempt woman to.

*Lucifer.* But there  
Are some things still which woman may tempt man to, 210  
And man tempt woman:—let thy sons look to it!  
My counsel is a kind one; for 'tis even  
Given chiefly at my own expense; 'tis true,  
'Twill not be followed, so there 's little lost.<sup>1</sup>

*Cain.* I understand not this.

*Lucifer.* The happier thou!—  
Thy world and thou are still too young! Thou thinkest  
Thyself most wicked and unhappy—is it  
Not so?

*Cain.* For crime, I know not; but for pain,  
I have felt much.

*Lucifer.* First-born of the first man!  
Thy present state of sin—and thou art evil, 220  
Of sorrow—and thou sufferest, are both Eden

1. [Lucifer's candour and disinterested advice are "after" and in the manner of Mephistopheles.]



In all its innocence compared to what  
Thou shortly may'st be ; and that state again,  
In its redoubled wretchedness, a Paradise  
To what thy sons' sons' sons, accumulating  
In generations like to dust (which they  
In fact but add to), shall endure and do.—  
Now let us back to earth !

*Cain.* And wherefore didst thou  
Lead me here only to inform me this ?

*Lucifer.* Was not thy quest for knowledge ?

*Cain.* Yes—as being 230  
The road to happiness !

*Lucifer.* If truth be so,  
Thou hast it.

*Cain.* Then my father's God did well  
When he prohibited the fatal Tree.

*Lucifer.* But had done better in not planting it.  
But ignorance of evil doth not save  
From evil ; it must still roll on the same,  
A part of all things.

*Cain.* Not of all things. No—  
I'll not believe it—for I thirst for good.

*Lucifer.* And who and what doth not ? *Who* covets  
evil  
For its own bitter sake ?—*None*—nothing ! 'tis 240  
The heaven of all life, and lifelessness.

*Cain.* Within those glorious orbs which we behold,  
Distant, and dazzling, and innumerable,  
Ere we came down into this phantom realm,  
Ill cannot come : they are too beautiful.

*Lucifer.* Thou hast seen them from afar.

*Cain.* And what of that ?  
Distance can but diminish glory—they,  
When nearer, must be more ineffable.

*Lucifer.* Approach the things of earth most beautiful,  
And judge their beauty near.

*Cain.* I have done this— 250  
The loveliest thing I know is loveliest nearest.

*Lucifer.* Then there must be delusion.—What is that  
Which being nearest to thine eyes is still  
More beautiful than beauteous things remote ?

*Cain.* My sister Adah.—All the stars of heaven,  
The deep blue noon of night, lit by an orb  
Which looks a spirit, or a spirit's world—  
The hues of twilight—the Sun's gorgeous coming—  
His setting indescribable, which fills  
My eyes with pleasant tears as I behold 260  
Him sink, and feel my heart float softly with him  
Along that western paradise of clouds—  
The forest shade, the green bough, the bird's voice—  
The vesper bird's, which seems to sing of love,  
And mingles with the song of Cherubim,  
As the day closes over Eden's walls;—  
All these are nothing, to my eyes and heart,  
Like Adah's face: I turn from earth and heaven  
To gaze on it.

*Lucifer.* 'Tis fair as frail mortality,  
In the first dawn and bloom of young creation, 270  
And earliest embraces of earth's parents,  
Can make its offspring; still it is delusion.

*Cain.* You think so, being not her brother.

*Lucifer.* Mortal!  
My brotherhood's with those who have no children.

*Cain.* Then thou canst have no fellowship with us.

*Lucifer.* It may be that thine own shall be for me.  
But if thou dost possess a beautiful  
Being beyond all beauty in thine eyes,  
Why art thou wretched?

*Cain.* Why do I exist?  
Why art *thou* wretched? why are all things so? 280  
Ev'n he who made us must be, as the maker  
Of things unhappy! To produce destruction  
Can surely never be the task of joy,  
And yet my sire says he's omnipotent:  
Then why is Evil—he being Good? I asked  
This question of my father; and he said,  
Because this Evil only was the path  
To Good. Strange Good, that must arise from out  
Its deadly opposite. I lately saw  
A lamb stung by a reptile: the poor suckling 290  
Lay foaming on the earth, beneath the vain  
And piteous bleating of its restless dam;

My father plucked some herbs, and laid them to  
 The wound; and by degrees the helpless wretch  
 Resumed its careless life, and rose to drain  
 The mother's milk, who o'er it tremulous  
 Stood licking its reviving limbs with joy.  
 Behold, my son! said Adam, how from Evil  
 Springs Good!<sup>1</sup>

*Lucifer.* What didst thou answer?

*Cain.* Nothing; for  
 He is my father: but I thought, that 'twere  
 A better portion for the animal  
 Never to have been *stung at all*, than to  
 Purchase renewal of its little life  
 With agonies unutterable, though  
 Dispelled by antidotes.

*Lucifer.* But as thou saidst  
 Of all belovéd things thou lovest her  
 Who shared thy mother's milk, and giveth hers  
 Unto thy children——

*Cain.* Most assuredly:  
 What should I be without her?

*Lucifer.* What am I?

*Cain.* Dost thou love nothing?

*Lucifer.* What does thy God love? 310

*Cain.* All things, my father says; but I confess  
 I see it not in their allotment here.

*Lucifer.* And, therefore, thou canst not see if I love  
 Or no—except some vast and general purpose,  
 To which particular things must melt like snows.

*Cain.* Snows! what are they?

*Lucifer.* Be happier in not knowing  
 What thy remoter offspring must encounter;

1. ["If you say that God permitted sin to manifest His wisdom, which shines the more brightly by the disorders which the wickedness of men produces every day, than it would have done in a state of innocence, it may be answered that this is to compare the Deity to a father who should suffer his children to break their legs on purpose to show to all the city his great art in setting their broken bones; or to a king who should suffer seditions and factions to increase through all his kingdom, that he might purchase the glory of quelling them. . . . This is that doctrine of a Father of the Church who said, 'Felix culpa quæ talem Redemptorem meruit!'"]—Bayle's *Dictionary*, 1737, art. "Paulicians," note B, 25, iv. 515.]

But bask beneath the clime which knows no winter.

*Cain.* But dost thou not love something like thyself?

*Lucifer.* And dost thou love *thyself*?

*Cain.* Yes, but love more 320

What makes my feelings more endurable,

And is more than myself, because I love it!

*Lucifer.* Thou lovest it, because 'tis beautiful,

As was the apple in thy mother's eye;

And when it ceases to be so, thy love

Will cease, like any other appetite.<sup>1</sup>

*Cain.* Cease to be beautiful! how can that be?

*Lucifer.* With time.

*Cain.* But time has passed, and hitherto

Even Adam and my mother both are fair:

Not fair like Adah and the Seraphim—

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But very fair.

*Lucifer.* All that must pass away

In them and her.

*Cain.* I'm sorry for it; but

Cannot conceive my love for her the less:

And when her beauty disappears, methinks

He who creates all beauty will lose more

Than me in seeing perish such a work.

*Lucifer.* I pity thee who lovest what must perish.

*Cain.* And I thee who lov'st nothing.

*Lucifer.* And thy brother—  
Sits he not near thy heart?

*Cain.* Why should he not?

*Lucifer.* Thy father loves him well—so does thy God. 340

*Cain.* And so do I.

*Lucifer.* 'Tis well and meekly done.

*Cain.* Meekly!

*Lucifer.* He is the second born of flesh,  
And is his mother's favourite.

1. [Lucifer does not infect Cain with his cynical theories as to the origin and endurance of love. For the antidote, compare Wordsworth's sonnet "To a Painter" (No. 11), written in 1841—

"Morn into noon did pass, noon into eve,  
And the old day was welcome as the young,  
As welcome, and as beautiful—in sooth  
More beautiful, as being a thing more holy,' etc.

[Works, 1889, p. 772.]

*Cain.* Let him keep  
Her favour, since the Serpent was the first  
To win it.

*Lucifer.* And his father's?

*Cain.* What is that  
To me? should I not love that which all love?

*Lucifer.* And the Jehovah—the indulgent Lord,  
And bounteous planter of barred Paradise—  
He, too, looks smilingly on Abel.

*Cain.* I  
Ne'er saw him, and I know not if he smiles. 350  
*Lucifer.* But you have seen his angels.

*Cain.* Rarely.

*Lucifer.* But  
Sufficiently to see they love your brother :  
*His* sacrifices are acceptable.

*Cain.* So be they ! wherefore speak to me of this ?

*Lucifer.* Because thou hast thought of this ere now.

*Cain.* And if  
I *have* thought, why recall a thought that—(*he pauses*  
*as agitated*)—Spirit !

*Here* we are in *thy* world ; speak not of *mine*.  
Thou hast shown me wonders : thou hast shown me those  
Mighty Pre-Adamites who walked the earth  
Of which ours is the wreck : thou hast pointed out 360  
Myriads of starry worlds, of which our own  
Is the dim and remote companion, in  
Infinity of life : thou hast shown me shadows  
Of that existence with the dreaded name  
Which my sire brought us—Death ;<sup>i</sup> thou hast shown  
me much

But not all : show me where Jehovah dwells,  
In his especial Paradise—or *thine* :  
Where is it ?

*Lucifer.* *Here*, and o'er all space.

*Cain.* But ye  
Have some allotted dwelling—as all things ;  
Clay has its earth, and other worlds their tenants ; 370  
All temporary breathing creatures their  
Peculiar element ; and things which have

i. Which my sire shrinks from—Death —.—[*MS. erased.*]

Long ceased to breathe *our* breath, have theirs, thou say'st;

And the Jehovah and thyself have thine—

Ye do not dwell together?

*Lucifer.* No, we reign  
Together; but our dwellings are asunder.

*Cain.* Would there were only one of ye! perchance  
An unity of purpose might make union

In elements which seem now jarred in storms.

How came ye, being Spirits wise and infinite, 380

To separate? Are ye not as brethren in

Your essence—and your nature, and your glory?

*Lucifer.* Art not thou Abel's brother?

*Cain.* We are brethren,  
And so we shall remain; but were it not so,

Is spirit like to flesh? can it fall out—

Infinity with Immortality?

Jarring and turning space to misery—

For what?

*Lucifer.* To reign.

*Cain.* Did ye not tell me that

Ye are both eternal?

*Lucifer.* Yea!

*Cain.* And what I have seen—

Yon blue immensity, is boundless?

*Lucifer.* Aye. 390

*Cain.* And cannot ye both *reign*, then?—is there not  
Enough?—why should ye differ?

*Lucifer.* We *both* reign.

*Cain.* But one of you makes evil.

*Lucifer.* Which?

*Cain.* Thou! for  
If thou canst do man good, why dost thou not?

*Lucifer.* And why not he who made? *I* made ye  
not;

Ye are *his* creatures, and not mine.

*Cain.* Then leave us

*His* creatures, as thou say'st we are, or show me

Thy dwelling, or *his* dwelling.

*Lucifer.* I could show thee  
Both; but the time will come thou shalt see one

Of them for evermore.<sup>1</sup>

*Cain.* And why not now? 400

*Lucifer.* Thy human mind hath scarcely grasp to gather  
The little I have shown thee into calm  
And clear thought: and *thou* wouldst go on aspiring  
To the great double Mysteries! the *two Principles!*<sup>2</sup>  
And gaze upon them on their secret thrones!  
Dust! limit thy ambition; for to see  
Either of these would be for thee to perish!

*Cain.* And let me perish, so I see them!

*Lucifer.* There  
The son of her who snatched the apple spake!  
But thou wouldst only perish, and not see them; 410  
That sight is for the other state.

*Cain.* Of Death?

*Lucifer.* That is the prelude.

*Cain.* Then I dread it less,  
Now that I know it leads to something definite.

*Lucifer.* And now I will convey thee to thy world,  
Where thou shalt multiply the race of Adam,  
Eat, drink, toil, tremble, laugh, weep, sleep—and die!

*Cain.* And to what end have I beheld these things  
Which thou hast shown me?

*Lucifer.* Didst thou not require  
Knowledge? And have I not, in what I showed,  
Taught thee to know thyself?

*Cain.* Alas! I seem 420  
Nothing.<sup>3</sup>

1. [In Byron's Diary for January 28, 1821, we find the following entry—

“*Thought for a speech of Lucifer, in the Tragedy of Cain.*

“Were *Death* an *evil*, would I let thee *live*?

Fool! live as I live—as thy father lives,

And thy sons' sons shall live for evermore!”

*Letters*, 1901, v. 191.]

2. [Matthew Arnold (*Poetry of Byron*, 1881, p. xxii.) quotes these lines as an instance of Byron's unknowingness and want of humour. It cannot be denied that he leaves imbedded in his fabric lumps of unshapen material, which mar the symmetry of his art. *Lucifer's* harangue involves a reference to “hard words ending in *ism*.” The *spirit* of error, not the Manichæan heresy, should have proceeded out of his lips.]

3. [“*Cain* is a proud man: if *Lucifer* promised him kingdoms, etc.,

*Lucifer.* And this should be the human sum  
Of knowledge, to know mortal nature's nothingness ;  
Bequeath that science to thy children, and  
Twill spare them many tortures.

*Cain.* Haughty spirit !  
Thou speak'st it proudly ; but thyself, though proud,  
Hast a superior.

*Lucifer.* No ! By heaven, which he  
Holds, and the abyss, and the immensity  
Of worlds and life, which I hold with him—No !  
I have a Victor—true ; but no superior.<sup>1</sup>  
Homage he has from all—but none from me : 430  
I battle it against him, as I battled  
In highest Heaven—through all Eternity,  
And the unfathomable gulfs of Hades,  
And the interminable realms of space,  
And the infinity of endless ages,  
All, all, will I dispute ! And world by world,  
And star by star, and universe by universe,  
Shall tremble in the balance, till the great  
Conflict shall cease, if ever it shall cease,  
Which it ne'er shall, till he or I be quenched ! 440  
And what can quench our immortality,  
Or mutual and irrevocable hate ?  
He as a conqueror will call the conquered

it would *elate* him : the object of the Demon is to *depress* him still further in his own estimation than he was before, by showing him infinite things and his own abasement, till he falls into the frame of mind that leads to the catastrophe, from mere *internal* irritation, *not* premeditation, or envy of Abel (which would have made him contemptible), but from the rage and fury against the inadequacy of his state to his conceptions, and which discharges itself rather against Life,<sup>1</sup> and the author of Life, than the mere living."—Letter to Moore, November 3, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 470. Here, no doubt, Byron is speaking *in propria personâ*. It was this sense of limitation, of human nothingness, which provoked an "internal irritation . . . a rage and fury against the inadequacy of his state to his conceptions." His "spirit beats its mortal bars," not, like Galahad, to be possessed by, but to possess the Heavenly Vision.]

1. [Compare—

"What though the field be lost,  
All is not lost ; th' unconquerable will  
And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
And courage never to submit or yield."

*Paradise Lost*, i. 105-108.]



*Evil*; but what will be the *Good* he gives?  
 Were I the victor, *his* works would be deemed  
 The only evil ones. And you, ye new  
 And scarce-born mortals, what have been his gifts  
 To you already, in your little world?

*Cain.* But few; and some of those but bitter.

*Lucifer.*

Back

With me, then, to thine earth, and try the rest  
 Of his celestial boons to you and yours.  
 Evil and Good are things in their own essence,  
 And not made good or evil by the Giver;  
 But if he gives you good—so call him; if  
 Evil springs from *him*, do not name it *mine*,  
 Till ye know better its true fount; and judge  
 Not by words, though of Spirits, but the fruits  
 Of your existence, such as it must be.

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*One good* gift has the fatal apple given,—  
 Your *reason*:—let it not be overruled  
 By tyrannous threats to force you into faith  
 'Gainst all external sense and inward feeling;  
 Think and endure,—and form an inner world  
 In your own bosom—where the outward fails;  
 So shall you nearer be the spiritual  
 Nature, and war triumphant with your own.

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[*They disappear.*]

### ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Earth, near Eden, as in Act I.*

*Enter CAIN and ADAH.*

*Adah.* Hush! tread softly, Cain!

*Cain.* I will—but wherefore?

*Adah.* Our little Enoch sleeps upon yon bed  
 Of leaves, beneath the cypress.

*Cain.* Cypress! 'tis  
 A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourned  
 O'er what it shadows; wherefore didst thou choose it  
 For our child's canopy?

*Adah.* Because its branches  
Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seemed  
Fitting to shadow slumber.

*Cain.* Aye, the last—  
And longest ; but no matter—lead me to him.

[*They go up to the child.*  
How lovely he appears ! his little cheeks, 10  
In their pure incarnation,<sup>1</sup> vying with  
The rose leaves strewn beneath them.

*Adah.* And his lips, too,  
How beautifully parted ! No ; you shall not  
Kiss him, at least not now : he will awake soon—  
His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over ;  
But it were pity to disturb him till  
'Tis closed.

*Cain.* You have said well ; I will contain  
My heart till then. He smiles, and sleeps !—sleep on,  
And smile, thou little, young inheritor  
Of a world scarce less young : sleep on, and smile ! 20  
Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering  
And innocent ! *thou* hast not plucked the fruit—  
Thou know'st not thou art naked ! Must the time  
Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,  
Which were not thine nor mine ? But now sleep on !  
His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles,  
And shining lids are trembling o'er his long  
Lashes,<sup>2</sup> dark as the cypress which waves o'er them ;  
Half open, from beneath them the clear blue  
Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream— 30  
Of what ? Of Paradise !—Aye ! dream of it,  
My disinherited boy ! 'Tis but a dream ;  
For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,  
Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy !

*Adah.* Dear Cain ! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son  
Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past :

1. [An obsolete form of *carnation*, the colour of "flesh."]

2. [Compare—

"Her dewy eyes are closed,  
And on their lids, whose texture fine  
Scarce hides the dark-blue orbs beneath,  
The baby Sleep is pillowed."

Shelley's *Queen Mab*, i., *ibid.*, p. 104.]

Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise ?  
Can we not make another ?

*Cain.* Where ?

*Adah.* Here, or  
Where'er thou wilt : where'er thou art, I feel not  
The want of this so much regretted Eden. 40  
Have I not thee—our boy—our sire, and brother,  
And Zillah—our sweet sister, and our Eve,  
To whom we owe so much besides our birth ?

*Cain.* Yes—Death, too, is amongst the debts we owe  
her.

*Adah.* Cain ! that proud Spirit, who withdrew thee  
hence,  
Hath saddened thine still deeper. I had hoped  
The promised wonders which thou hast beheld,  
Visions, thou say'st, of past and present worlds,  
Would have composed thy mind into the calm  
Of a contented knowledge ; but I see 50  
Thy guide hath done thee evil : still I thank him,  
And can forgive him all, that he so soon  
Hath given thee back to us.

*Cain.* So soon ?

*Adah.* 'Tis scarcely  
Two hours since ye departed : two *long* hours  
To *me*, but only *hours* upon the sun.

*Cain.* And yet I have approached that sun, and seen  
Worlds which he once shone on, and never more  
Shall light ; and worlds he never lit : methought  
Years had rolled o'er my absence.

*Adah.* Hardly hours.

*Cain.* The mind then hath capacity of time, 60  
And measures it by that which it beholds,  
Pleasing or painful ;<sup>1</sup> little or almighty.

1. ["Time is our consciousness of the succession of ideas in our mind. . . . One man is stretched on the rack during twelve hours, another sleeps soundly in his bed. The difference of time perceived by these two persons is immense : one hardly will believe that half an hour has elapsed, the other could credit that centuries had flown during his agony."—Shelley's note to the lines—

" . . . the thoughts that rise  
In time-destroying infiniteness."

*Queen Mab*, viii., *ibid.*, p. 136.]

I had beheld the immemorial works  
Of endless beings ; skirred extinguished worlds ;  
And, gazing on eternity, methought  
I had borrowed more by a few drops of ages  
From its immensity : but now I feel  
My littleness again. Well said the Spirit,  
That I was nothing !

*Adah.* Wherefore said he so ?  
Jehovah said not that.

*Cain.* No : *he* contents him 70  
With making us the *nothing* which we are ;  
And after flattering dust with glimpses of  
Eden and Immortality, resolves  
It back to dust again—for what ?

*Adah.* Thou know'st—  
Even for our parents' error.

*Cain.* What is that  
To us ? they sinned, then *let them* die !

*Adah.* Thou hast not spoken well, nor is that thought  
Thy own, but of the Spirit who was with thee.  
Would *I* could die for them, so *they* might live !

*Cain.* Why, so say I—provided that one victim 80  
Might satiate the Insatiable of life,  
And that our little rosy sleeper there  
Might never taste of death nor human sorrow,  
Nor hand it down to those who spring from him.

*Adah.* How know we that some such atonement one  
day  
May not redeem our race ?

*Cain.* By sacrificing  
The harmless for the guilty ? what atonement <sup>1</sup>  
Were there ? why, *we* are innocent : what have we  
Done, that we must be victims for a deed  
Before our birth, or need have victims to 90  
Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin—  
If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge ?

*Adah.* Alas ! thou sinnest now, my Cain : thy words  
Sound impious in mine ears.

*Cain.* Then leave me !

*Adah.* Never,

Though thy God left thee.

*Cain.* Say, what have we here?

*Adah.* Two altars, which our brother Abel made  
During thine absence, whereupon to offer  
A sacrifice to God on thy return.

*Cain.* And how knew *he*, that *I* would be so ready  
With the burnt offerings, which he daily brings 100  
With a meek brow, whose base humility  
Shows more of fear than worship—as a bribe  
To the Creator?

*Adah.* Surely, 'tis well done.

*Cain.* One altar may suffice; *I* have no offering.

*Adah.* The fruits of the earth,<sup>1</sup> the early, beautiful,  
Blossom and bud—and bloom of flowers and fruits—  
These are a goodly offering to the Lord,  
Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.

*Cain.* I have toiled, and tilled, and sweaten in the  
sun,  
According to the curse:—must I do more? 110  
For what should I be gentle? for a war  
With all the elements ere they will yield  
The bread we eat? For what must I be grateful?  
For being dust, and grovelling in the dust,  
Till I return to dust? If I am nothing—  
For nothing shall I be an hypocrite,  
And seem well-pleased with pain? For what should I  
Be contrite? for my father's sin, already  
Expiate with what we all have undergone,  
And to be more than expiated by 120  
The ages prophesied, upon our seed.  
Little deems our young blooming sleeper, there,  
The germs of an eternal misery  
To myriads is within him! better 'twere  
I snatched him in his sleep, and dashed him 'gainst  
The rocks, than let him live to——

*Adah.*

Oh, my God!

1. [It is Adah, Cain's wife, who suggests the disastrous compromise, not a "burnt-offering," but the "fruits of the earth," which would cost the giver little or nothing—an instance in point of Lucifer's cynical reminder (*vide ante*, act ii. sc. 2, line 210, p. 247) "that there are some things still which woman may tempt man to."]

Touch not the child—my child! *thy* child! Oh, Cain!

*Cain.* Fear not! for all the stars, and all the power  
Which sways them, I would not accost yon infant  
With ruder greeting than a father's kiss. 130

*Adah.* Then, why so awful in thy speech?

*Cain.* I said,  
'Twere better that he ceased to live, than give  
Life to so much of sorrow as he must  
Endure, and, harder still, bequeath; but since  
That saying jars you, let us only say—  
'Twere better that he never had been born.

*Adah.* Oh, do not say so! Where were then the  
joys,  
The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,  
And loving him? Soft! he awakes. Sweet Enoch!

[*She goes to the child.*  
Oh, Cain! look on him; see how full of life, 140  
Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy—

How like to me—how like to thee, when gentle—  
For *then* we are *all* alike; is't not so, Cain?  
Mother, and sire, and son, our features are  
Reflected in each other; as they are  
In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*, and  
When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my Cain!  
And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.  
Look! how he laughs and stretches out his arms,  
And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine, 150  
To hail his father; while his little form  
Flutters as winged with joy. Talk not of pain!  
The childless cherubs well might envy thee  
The pleasures of a parent! Bless him, Cain!  
As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but  
His heart will, and thine own too.

*Cain.* Bless thee, boy!  
If that a mortal blessing may avail thee,  
To save thee from the Serpent's curse!

*Adah.* It shall.  
Surely a father's blessing may avert  
A reptile's subtlety.

*Cain.* Of that I doubt; 160  
But bless him ne'er the less.

*Adah.*

Our brother comes.

*Cain.* Thy brother Abel.

*Enter ABEL.*

*Abel.* Welcome, Cain! My brother,  
The peace of God be on thee!

*Cain.* Abel, hail!

*Abel.* Our sister tells me that thou hast been wandering,  
In high communion with a Spirit, far  
Beyond our wonted range. Was he of those  
We have seen and spoken with, like to our father?

*Cain.* No.

*Abel.* Why then commune with him? he may be  
A foe to the Most High.

*Cain.* And friend to man.  
Has the Most High been so—if so you term him? 170

*Abel.* Term him! your words are strange to-day, my  
brother.

My sister Adah, leave us for awhile—  
We mean to sacrifice.<sup>1</sup>

*Adah.* Farewell, my Cain;  
But first embrace thy son. May his soft spirit,  
And Abel's pious ministry, recall thee  
To peace and holiness! [*Exit ADAH, with her child.*]

*Abel.* Where hast thou been?

*Cain.* I know not.

*Abel.* Nor what thou hast seen?

*Cain.* The dead—  
The Immortal—the Unbounded—the Omnipotent—  
The overpowering mysteries of space—  
The innumerable worlds that were and are— 180  
A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,  
Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres  
Singing in thunder round me, as have made me  
Unfit for mortal converse: leave me, Abel.

*Abel.* Thine eyes are flashing with unnatural light—

1. ["From the beginning" the woman is ineligible for the priesthood  
—"He for God only, she for God in him" (*Paradise Lost*, iv. 299).  
"Let the women keep silence in the churches" (*Corinthians*, i. xiv.  
34).]

Thy cheek is flushed with an unnatural hue—  
Thy words are fraught with an unnatural sound—  
What may this mean?

*Cain.* It means—I pray thee, leave me

*Abel.* Not till we have prayed and sacrificed together.

*Cain.* Abel, I pray thee, sacrifice alone— 190  
Jehovah loves thee well.

*Abel.* *Both* well, I hope.

*Cain.* But thee the better : I care not for that ;  
Thou art fitter for his worship than I am ;  
Revere him, then—but let it be alone—  
At least, without me.

*Abel.* Brother, I should ill  
Deserve the name of our great father's son,  
If, as my elder, I revered thee not,  
And in the worship of our God, called not  
On thee to join me, and precede me in  
Our priesthood—'tis thy place.

*Cain.* But I have ne'er 200  
Asserted it.

*Abel.* The more my grief ; I pray thee  
To do so now : thy soul seems labouring in  
Some strong delusion ; it will calm thee.

*Cain.* No ;  
Nothing can calm me more. *Calm !* say I ? Never  
Knew I what calm was in the soul, although  
I have seen the elements stilled. My Abel, leave me !  
Or let me leave thee to thy pious purpose.

*Abel.* Neither ; we must perform our task together.  
Spurn me not.

*Cain.* If it must be so——well, then,  
What shall I do?

*Abel.* Choose one of those two altars. 210

*Cain.* Choose for me : they to me are so much turf  
And stone.

*Abel.* Choose thou !

*Cain.* I have chosen.

*Abel.* 'Tis the highest,  
And suits thee, as the elder. Now prepare  
Thine offerings.

*Cain.* Where are thine ?



*Abel.* Behold them here—  
The firstlings of the flock, and fat thereof—  
A shepherd's humble offering.

*Cain.* I have no flocks ;  
I am a tiller of the ground, and must  
Yield what it yieldeth to my toil—its fruit :

[*He gathers fruits.*  
Behold them in their various bloom and ripeness.

[*They dress their altars, and kindle a flame upon them.*<sup>1</sup>

*Abel.* My brother, as the elder, offer first 220  
Thy prayer and thanksgiving with sacrifice.

*Cain.* No—I am new to this ; lead thou the way,  
And I will follow—as I may.

*Abel (kneeling).* Oh, God !  
Who made us, and who breathed the breath of life  
Within our nostrils, who hath blessed us,  
And spared, despite our father's sin, to make  
His children all lost, as they might have been,  
Had not thy justice been so tempered with  
The mercy which is thy delight, as to  
Accord a pardon like a Paradise, 230  
Compared with our great crimes :—Sole Lord of light !  
Of good, and glory, and eternity !  
Without whom all were evil, and with whom  
Nothing can err, except to some good end  
Of thine omnipotent benevolence !  
Inscrutable, but still to be fulfilled !  
Accept from out thy humble first of shepherds'  
First of the first-born flocks—an offering,  
In itself nothing—as what offering can be  
Aught unto thee?—but yet accept it for 240

1. [Compare the following passage from *La Rappresentazione di Abel et di Caino* (in Firenze l'anno MDLIV.)—

" Abel parla a dio fatto il sacrificio,  
Rendendogli laude.  
Signor per cui di tanti bene abondo  
Liquali tu sommamente mi concedi  
Tanto mi piace, et tanto me' giocondo  
Quanto delle mie greggie che tu vedi  
El piu grasso el migliore el piu mondo  
Ti do con lieto core come tu vedi  
Tu vedi la intentione con lequal vegno," etc.

The thanksgiving of him who spreads it in  
The face of thy high heaven—bowing his own  
Even to the dust, of which he is—in honour  
Of thee, and of thy name, for evermore !

*Cain (standing erect during this speech).* Spirit whate'er  
or whosoe'er thou art,

Omnipotent, it may be—and, if good,  
Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from evil ;  
Jehovah upon earth ! and God in heaven !  
And it may be with other names, because  
Thine attributes seem many, as thy works :— 250  
If thou must be propitiated with prayers,  
Take them ! If thou must be induced with altars,  
And softened with a sacrifice, receive them ;  
Two beings here erect them unto thee.

If thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine, which smokes  
On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service  
In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek  
In sanguinary incense to thy skies ;  
Or, if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,  
And milder seasons, which the unstained turf 260  
I spread them on now offers in the face

Of the broad sun which ripened them, may seem  
Good to thee—inasmuch as they have not  
Suffered in limb or life—and rather form  
A sample of thy works, than supplication  
To look on ours ! If a shrine without victim,  
And altar without gore, may win thy favour,  
Look on it ! and for him who dresseth it,  
He is—such as thou mad'st him ; and seeks nothing  
Which must be won by kneeling : if he 's evil,<sup>i</sup> 270  
Strike him ! thou art omnipotent, and may'st—  
For what can he oppose ? If he be good,  
Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt ! since all  
Rests upon thee ; and Good and Evil seem  
To have no power themselves, save in thy will—  
And whether that be good or ill I know not,  
Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge  
Omnipotence—but merely to endure  
Its mandate ; which thus far I have endured.

i. Which must be won with prayers—if he be evil.—[MS. M.]

[*The fire upon the altar of ABEL kindles into a column of the brightest flame, and ascends to heaven; while a whirlwind throws down the altar of CAIN, and scatters the fruits abroad upon the earth.*<sup>1</sup>

*Abel (kneeling).* Oh, brother, pray! Jehovah's wroth with thee. 280

*Cain.* Why so?

*Abel.* Thy fruits are scattered on the earth.

*Cain.* From earth they came, to earth let them return; Their seed will bear fresh fruit there ere the summer: Thy burnt flesh-offering prospers better; see How Heaven licks up the flames, when thick with blood!

*Abel.* Think not upon my offering's acceptance, But make another of thine own—before It is too late.

*Cain.* I will build no more altars, Nor suffer any——

*Abel (rising).* Cain! what meanest thou?

*Cain.* To cast down yon vile flatterer of the clouds, The smoky harbinger of thy dull prayers— 291  
Thine altar, with its blood of lambs and kids, Which fed on milk, to be destroyed in blood.

*Abel (opposing him).* Thou shalt not:—add not impious works to impious Words! let that altar stand—'tis hallowed now By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah, In his acceptance of the victims.

*Cain.* *His!*

*His pleasure!* what was his high pleasure in The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood, To the pain of the bleating mothers, which 300  
Still yearn for their dead offspring? or the pangs Of the sad ignorant victims underneath Thy pious knife? Give way! this bloody record Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation!

*Abel.* Brother, give back! thou shalt not touch my altar  
With violence: if that thou wilt adopt it, To try another sacrifice, 'tis thine.

1. [See Gessner's *Death of Abel*.]

*Cain.* Another sacrifice ! Give way, or else  
That sacrifice may be——

*Abel.* What mean'st thou ?

*Cain.* Give—— Give way !—thy God loves blood !—then look to it :—  
Give way, ere he hath *more* !

*Abel.* In *his* great name, 311  
I stand between thee and the shrine which hath  
Had his acceptance.

*Cain.* If thou lov'st thyself,  
Stand back till I have strewed this turf along  
Its native soil :—else——

*Abel (opposing him).* I love God far more  
Than life.

*Cain (striking him with a brand, on the temples, which  
he snatches from the altar).* Then take thy life  
unto thy God,  
Since he loves lives.

*Abel (falls).* What hast thou done—my brother ?

*Cain.* Brother !

*Abel.* Oh, God ! receive thy servant ! and  
Forgive his slayer, for he knew not what  
He did—Cain, give me—give me thy hand ; and tell 320  
Poor Zillah—

*Cain (after a moment's stupefaction).* My hand ! 'tis all  
red, and with——  
What ? [A long pause.—Looking slowly round.

Where am I ? alone ! Where 's Abel ? where  
Cain ? Can it be that I am he ? My brother,  
Awake !—why liest thou so long on the green earth ?  
'Tis not the hour of slumber :—why so pale ?  
What hast thou !—thou wert full of life this morn !  
Abel ! I pray thee, mock me not ! I smote  
Too fiercely, but not fatally. Ah, why  
Wouldst thou oppose me ? This is mockery ;  
And only done to daunt me :—'twas a blow— 330  
And but a blow. Stir—stir—nay, only stir !  
Why, so—that 's well !—thou breathest ! breathe upon me !  
Oh God ! Oh God !

*Abel (very faintly).* What 's he who speaks of God ?

*Cain.* Thy murderer.

*Abel.* Then may God forgive him ! Cain,  
Comfort poor Zillah :—she has but one brother  
Now. [ABEL dies.]

*Cain.* And I none !—Who makes me brotherless ?  
His eyes are open ! then he is not dead !  
Death is like sleep ;<sup>1</sup> and sleep shuts down our lids.  
His lips, too, are apart ; why then he breathes ;  
And yet I feel it not.—His heart !—his heart !— 340  
Let me see, doth it beat ? methinks——No !—no !  
This is a vision, else I am become  
The native of another and worse world.  
The earth swims round me :—what is this ?—'tis wet ;  
[Puts his hand to his brow, and then looks at it.]  
And yet there are no dews ! 'Tis blood—my blood—  
My brother's and my own ! and shed by me !  
Then what have I further to do with life,  
Since I have taken life from my own flesh ?  
But he can not be dead !—Is silence death ?  
No ; he will wake ; then let me watch by him. 350  
Life cannot be so slight, as to be quenched  
Thus quickly !—he hath spoken to me since—  
What shall I say to him ?—My brother !—No :  
He will not answer to that name ; for brethren  
Smite not each other. Yet—yet—speak to me.  
Oh ! for a word more of that gentle voice,  
That I may bear to hear my own again !

*Enter ZILLAH.*

*Zillah.* I heard a heavy sound ; what can it be ?  
'Tis Cain ; and watching by my husband. What  
Dost thou there, brother ? Doth he sleep ? Oh, Heaven !  
What means this paleness, and yon stream ?—No, no ! 361  
It is not blood ; for who would shed his blood ?  
Abel ! what 's this ?—who hath done this ? He moves  
not ;  
He breathes not : and his hands drop down from mine

1. [Compare—

“ How wonderful is Death —  
Death and his brother Sleep ! ”

*Queen Mab*, i. lines 1, 2.]

With stony lifelessness ! Ah ! cruel Cain !  
Why camest thou not in time to save him from  
This violence ? Whatever hath assailed him,  
Thou wert the stronger, and shouldst have stepped in  
Between him and aggression ! Father !—Eve !—  
Adah !—come hither ! Death is in the world ! 370

[*Exit ZILLAH, calling on her Parents, etc.*]

*Cain (solus).* And who hath brought him there ?—I—  
who abhor

The name of Death so deeply, that the thought  
Empoisoned all my life, before I knew  
His aspect—I have led him here, and given  
My brother to his cold and still embrace,  
As if he would not have asserted his  
Inexorable claim without my aid.  
I am awake at last—a dreary dream  
Had maddened me ;—but *he* shall ne'er awake !

*Enter ADAM, EVE, ADAH, and ZILLAH.*

*Adam.* A voice of woe from Zillah brings me here— 380  
What do I see ?—'Tis true !—My son !—my son !  
Woman, behold the Serpent's work, and thine ! [*To EVE.*]

*Eve.* Oh ! speak not of it now : the Serpent's fangs  
Are in my heart ! My best beloved, Abel !  
Jehovah ! this is punishment beyond  
A mother's sin, to take *him* from me !

*Adam.* Who,  
Or what hath done this deed ?—speak, Cain, since thou  
Wert present ; was it some more hostile angel,  
Who walks not with Jehovah ? or some wild  
Brute of the forest ?

*Eve.* Ah ! a livid light 390  
Breaks through, as from a thunder-cloud ! yon brand  
Massy and bloody ! snatched from off the altar,  
And black with smoke, and red with—

*Adam.* Speak, my son !  
Speak, and assure us, wretched as we are,  
That we are not more miserable still.

*Adah.* Speak, Cain ! and say it was not *thou* !

*Eve.*

It was !

I see it now—he hangs his guilty head,  
And covers his ferocious eye with hands  
Incarnadine !

*Adah.* Mother, thou dost him wrong—  
Cain ! clear thee from this horrible accusal, 400  
Which grief wrings from our parent.

*Eve.* Hear, Jehovah !  
May the eternal Serpent's curse be on him !  
For he was fitter for his seed than ours.  
May all his days be desolate ! May——

*Adah.* Hold !  
Curse him not, mother, for he is thy son—  
Curse him not, mother, for he is my brother,  
And my betrothed.

*Eve.* He hath left thee no brother—  
Zillah no husband—me *no son* ! for thus  
I curse him from my sight for evermore !  
All bonds I break between us, as he broke 410  
That of his nature, *in yon*——Oh Death ! Death !  
Why didst thou not take *me*, who first incurred thee ?  
Why dost thou not so now ?

*Adam.* Eve ! let not this,  
Thy natural grief, lead to impiety !  
A heavy doom was long forespoken to us ;  
And now that it begins, let it be borne  
In such sort as may show our God, that we  
Are faithful servants to his holy will.

*Eve (pointing to Cain).* *His will !* the will of yon  
Incarnate Spirit  
Of Death, whom I have brought upon the earth 420  
To strew it with the dead. May all the curses  
Of life be on him ! and his agonies  
Drive him forth o'er the wilderness, like us  
From Eden, till his children do by him  
As he did by his brother ! May the swords  
And wings of fiery Cherubim pursue him  
By day and night—snakes spring up in his path—  
Earth's fruits be ashes in his mouth—the leaves  
On which he lays his head to sleep be strewed  
With scorpions ! May his dreams be of his victim ! 430  
His waking a continual dread of Death !

May the clear rivers turn to blood as he<sup>1</sup>  
 Stoops down to stain them with his raging lip!  
 May every element shun or change to him!  
 May he live in the pangs which others die with!  
 And Death itself wax something worse than Death  
 To him who first acquainted him with man!  
 Hence, fratricide! henceforth that word is *Cain*,  
 Through all the coming myriads of mankind,  
 Who shall abhor thee, though thou wert their sire! 440  
 May the grass wither from thy feet! the woods  
 Deny thee shelter! earth a home! the dust  
 A grave! the sun his light! and heaven her God!<sup>2</sup>

[*Exit EVE.*

*Adam.* Cain! get thee forth: we dwell no more together.

Depart! and leave the dead to me—I am  
 Henceforth alone—we never must meet more.

*Adam.* Oh, part not with him thus, my father: do not  
 Add thy deep curse to Eve's upon his head!

*Adam.* I curse him not: his spirit be his curse.  
 Come, Zillah!

*Zillah.* I must watch my husband's corse.<sup>3</sup> 450

*Adam.* We will return again, when he is gone  
 Who hath provided for us this dread office.  
 Come, Zillah!

*Zillah.* Yet one kiss on yon pale clay,

1. [Compare—

“And Water shall hear me,  
 And know thee and fly thee;  
 And the Winds shall not touch thee  
 When they pass by thee. . . .  
 And thou shalt seek Death  
 To release thee in vain.”

*The Curse of Kehama*, by R. Southey, Canto II.]

2. [The last three lines of this terrible denunciation were not in the original MS. In forwarding them to Murray (September 12, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 361), to be added to Eve's speech, Byron says, “There's as pretty a piece of Imprecation for you, when joined to the lines already sent, as you may wish to meet with in the course of your business. But don't forget the addition of these three lines, which are clinchers to Eve's speech.”]

3. [If Byron had read his plays aloud, or been at pains to revise the proofs, he would hardly have allowed “corse” to remain in such close proximity to “curse.”]



And those lips once so warm—my heart ! my heart !

[*Exeunt ADAM and ZILLAH weeping.*]

*Adah.* Cain ! thou hast heard, we must go forth. I  
am ready,

So shall our children be. I will bear Enoch,  
And you his sister. Ere the sun declines  
Let us depart, nor walk the wilderness  
Under the cloud of night.—Nay, speak to me.  
To *me*—*thine own*.

*Cain.* Leave me !

*Adah.* Why, all have left thee. 460

*Cain.* And wherefore lingerest thou ? Dost thou not  
fear

To dwell with one who hath done this ?

*Adah.* I fear

Nothing except to leave thee, much as I  
Shrink from the deed which leaves thee brotherless.  
I must not speak of this—it is between thee  
And the great God.

*A Voice from within exclaims.* Cain ! Cain !

*Adah.* Hear'st thou that voice ?

*The Voice within.* Cain ! Cain !

*Adah.* It soundeth like an angel's tone.

*Enter the ANGEL of the Lord.*<sup>1</sup>

*Angel.* Where is thy brother Abel ?

*Cain.* Am I then

My brother's keeper ?

*Angel.* Cain ! what hast thou done ?

The voice of thy slain brother's blood cries out, 470  
Even from the ground, unto the Lord !—Now art thou  
Cursed from the earth, which opened late her mouth

1. ["I have avoided introducing the Deity, as in Scripture (though Milton does, and not very wisely either) ; but have adopted his angel as sent to Cain instead, on purpose to avoid shocking any feelings on the subject, by falling short of what all uninspired men must fall short in, viz. giving an adequate notion of the effect of the presence of Jehovah. The Old Mysteries introduced him liberally enough, and this is avoided in the New."—Letter to Murray, February 8, 1822, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 13. Byron does not seem to have known that in the older portions of the Bible "Angel of the Lord" is only a name for the Second Person of the Trinity.]

To drink thy brother's blood from thy rash hand.  
Henceforth, when thou shalt till the ground, it shall not  
Yield thee her strength; a fugitive shalt thou  
Be from this day, and vagabond on earth!

*Adah.* This punishment is more than he can bear.  
Behold thou drivest him from the face of earth,  
And from the face of God shall he be hid.  
A fugitive and vagabond on earth, 480  
'Twill come to pass, that whoso findeth him  
Shall slay him.

*Cain.* Would they could! but who are they  
Shall slay me? Where are these on the lone earth  
As yet unpeopled?

*Angel.* Thou hast slain thy brother,  
And who shall warrant thee against thy son?

*Adah.* Angel of Light! be merciful, nor say  
That this poor aching breast now nourishes  
A murderer in my boy, and of his father.

*Angel.* Then he would but be what his father is.  
Did not the milk of Eve give nutriment 490  
To him thou now seest so besmeared with blood?  
The fratricide might well engender parricides.—  
But it shall not be so—the Lord thy God  
And mine commandeth me to set his seal  
On Cain, so that he may go forth in safety.  
Who slayeth Cain, a sevenfold vengeance shall  
Be taken on his head. Come hither!

*Cain.* What  
Wouldst thou with me?

*Angel.* To mark upon thy brow  
Exemption from such deeds as thou hast done.

*Cain.* No, let me die!

*Angel.* It must not be.

[*The ANGEL sets the mark on CAIN'S brow.*

*Cain.* It burns 500  
My brow, but nought to that which is within it!  
Is there more? let me meet it as I may.

*Angel.* Stern hast thou been and stubborn from the  
womb,  
As the ground thou must henceforth till; but he

i. *On thy brow*—.—[*MS.*]

Thou slew'st was gentle as the flocks he tended.

*Cain.* After the fall too soon was I begotten ;  
 Ere yet my mother's mind subsided from  
 The Serpent, and my sire still mourned for Eden.  
 That which I am, I am ; I did not seek  
 For life, nor did I make myself ; but could I 510  
 With my own death redeem him from the dust—  
 And why not so ? let him return to day,  
 And I lie ghastly ! so shall be restored  
 By God the life to him he loved ; and taken  
 From me a being I ne'er loved to bear.

*Angel.* Who shall heal murder ? what is done, is done ;  
 Go forth ! fulfil thy days ! and be thy deeds  
 Unlike the last ! [The ANGEL disappears.]

*Adah.* He 's gone, let us go forth ;  
 I hear our little Enoch cry within  
 Our bower.

*Cain.* Ah ! little knows he what he weeps for ! 520  
 And I who have shed blood cannot shed tears !  
 But the four rivers<sup>1</sup> would not cleanse my soul.  
 Think'st thou my boy will bear to look on me ?

*Adah.* If I thought that he would not, I would——

*Cain (interrupting her).* No,  
 No more of threats : we have had too many of them :  
 Go to our children—I will follow thee.

*Adah.* I will not leave thee lonely with the dead—  
 Let us depart together.

*Cain.* Oh ! thou dead  
 And everlasting witness ! whose unsinking  
 Blood darkens earth and heaven ! what thou *now* art 530  
 I know not ! but if *thou* seest what *I* am,  
 I think thou wilt forgive him, whom his God  
 Can ne'er forgive, nor his own soul.—Farewell !  
 I must not, dare not touch what I have made thee.  
 I, who sprung from the same womb with thee, drained  
 The same breast, clasped thee often to my own,  
 In fondness brotherly and boyish, I  
 Can never meet thee more, nor even dare  
 To do that for thee, which thou shouldst have done

1. [The "four rivers" which flowed round Eden, and consequently the only waters with which Cain was acquainted upon earth.]

For me—compose thy limbs into their grave— 540  
The first grave yet dug for mortality.

But who hath dug that grave? Oh, earth! Oh, earth!  
For all the fruits thou hast rendered to me, I  
Give thee back this.—Now for the wilderness!

[*ADAH stoops down and kisses the body of ABEL.*

*Adah.* A dreary, and an early doom, my brother,  
Has been thy lot! Of all who mourn for thee,  
I alone must not weep. My office is  
Henceforth to dry up tears, and not to shed them;  
But yet of all who mourn, none mourn like me,  
Not only for thyself, but him who slew thee. 550  
Now, Cain! I will divide thy burden with thee.

*Cain.* Eastward from Eden will we take our way;  
'Tis the most desolate, and suits my steps.

*Adah.* Lead! thou shalt be my guide, and may our  
God

Be thine! Now let us carry forth our children.

*Cain.* And *he* who lieth there was childless! I  
Have dried the fountain of a gentle race,  
Which might have graced his recent marriage couch,  
And might have tempered this stern blood of mine,  
Uniting with our children Abel's offspring! 560  
O Abel!

*Adah.* Peace be with him!

*Cain.* But with *me!*——

[*Exeunt.*



# HEAVEN AND EARTH;

## A MYSTERY.

FOUNDED ON THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN GENESIS, CHAP. VI. 1, 2.

“And it came to pass . . . that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.”

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“And woman wailing for her demon lover.”  
Coleridge [*Kubla Khan*, line 16].



## INTRODUCTION TO HEAVEN AND EARTH.

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*HEAVEN and Earth* was begun at Ravenna October 9, 1821. "It occupied about fourteen days" (Medwin's *Conversations*, 1824, p. 231), and was forwarded to Murray, November 9, 1821. "You will find it," wrote Byron (*Letters*, 1901, v. 474), "pious enough, I trust—at least some of the Chorus might have been written by Sternhold and Hopkins themselves for that, and perhaps for the melody." It was on "a scriptural subject"—"less speculative than *Cain*, and very pious" (*Letters*, 1901, v. 475; vi. 31). It was to be published, he insists, at the same time, and, if possible, in the same volume with the "others" (*Sardanapalus*, etc.), and would serve, so he seems to have reflected ("The moment he reflects, he is a child," said Goethe), as an antidote to the audacities, or, as some would have it, the impieties of *Cain*!

He reckoned without his publisher, who understood the temper of the public and of the Government, and was naturally loth to awaken any more "reasonable doubts" in the mind of the Chancellor with regard to whether a "scriptural drama" was irreverent or profane. The new "Mystery" was revised by Gifford and printed, but withheld from month to month, till, at length, "the fire kindled," and, on the last day of October, 1821, Byron instructed John Hunt to "obtain from Mr. Murray *Werner: a Drama*, and another dramatic poem called *Heaven and Earth*." It was published in the second number of *The Liberal* (pp. 165-206), January 1, 1823.

The same subject, the unequal union of angelic lovers with the daughters of men, had taken Moore's fancy a year before Byron had begun to "dramatize the Old Testament." He had designed a long poem, but having discovered that Byron was at work on the same theme, he resolved to restrict himself to the production of an "episode," to "give himself the chance of . . . an *heliacal rising*," before he was outshone by the advent of a greater luminary. Thanks to



Murray's scruples, and the "translation" of MSS. to Hunt, the "episode" took the lead of the "Mystery" by eight days. The *Loves of the Angels* (see *Memoirs, etc.*, 1853, iv. 28) was published December 23, 1822. None the less, lyric and drama were destined to run in double harness. Critics found it convenient to review the two poems in the same article, and were at pains to draw a series of more or less pointed and pungent comparisons between the unwilling though not unwitting rivals.

Wilson, in *Blackwood*, writes, "The first [the *Loves, etc.*] is all glitter and point like a piece of Derbyshire spar, and the other is dark and massy like a block of marble. . . . Moore writes with a crow-quill, . . . Byron writes with an eagle's plume;" while Jeffrey, in the *Edinburgh*, likens Moore to "an *aurora borealis*" and Byron to "an eruption of Mount Vesuvius"!

There is, indeed, apart from the subject, nothing in common between Moore's tender and alluring lyric and Byron's gloomy and tumultuous rhapsody, while contrast is to be sought rather in the poets than in their poems. The *Loves of the Angels* is the finished composition of an accomplished designer of Amoretti, one of the best of his kind, *Heaven and Earth* is the rough and unpromising sketch thrown off by a great master.

Both the one and the other have passed out of the ken of readers of poetry, but, on the whole, the *Loves of the Angels* has suffered the greater injustice. It is opined that there may be possibilities in a half-forgotten work of Byron, but it is taken for granted that nothing worthy of attention is to be found in Moore. At the time, however, Moore scored a success, and Byron hardly escaped a failure. It is to be noted that within a month of publication (January 18, 1823) Moore was at work upon a revise for a fifth edition—consulting D'Herbelot "for the project of turning the poor 'Angels' into Turks," and so "getting rid of that connection with the Scriptures," which, so the Longmans feared, would "in the long run be a drag on the popularity of the poem" (*Memoirs, etc.*, 1853, iv. 41). It was no wonder that Murray was "timorous" with regard to Byron and his "scriptural dramas," when the Longmans started at the shadow of a scriptural allusion.

Byron, in his innocence, had taken for his motto the verse in *Genesis* (ch. vi. 2), which records the intermarriage of the "sons of God" with the "daughters of men." In *Heaven and Earth* the angels are angels, members, though erring members, of Jehovah's "thundering choir," and the daughters of men are the descendants of Cain. The question

had come up for debate owing to the recent appearance of a translation of the *Book of Enoch* (by Richard Laurence, LL.D., Oxford, 1821); and Moore, by way of safeguarding himself against any suspicion of theological irregularity, is careful to assure his readers ("Preface" to *Loves of the Angels*, 1823, p. viii. and *note*, pp. 125-127) that the "sons of God" were the descendants of Seth, and not beings of a supernatural order, as a mis-translation by the LXX., assisted by Philo and the "rhapsodical fictions of the *Book of Enoch*," had induced the ignorant or the profane to suppose. Nothing is so dangerous as innocence, and a little more of that *empeiria* of which Goethe accused him, would have saved Byron from straying from the path of orthodoxy.

It is impossible to say for certain whether Laurence's translation of the whole of the *Book of Enoch* had come under Byron's notice before he planned his new "Mystery," but it is plain that he was, at any rate, familiar with the well-known fragment, "Concerning the 'Watchers'" [*Περὶ τῶν Ἑρμηδῶν*], which is preserved in the *Chronographia* of Georgius Syncellus, and was first printed by J. J. Scaliger in *Thes. temp. Euseb.* in 1606. In the prophecy of the Deluge to which he alludes (*vide post*, p. 302, *note* 1), the names of the delinquent seraphs (Semjâzâ and Azâzêl), and of the archangelic monitor Raphael, are to be found in the fragment. The germ of *Heaven and Earth* is not in the *Book of Genesis*, but in the *Book of Enoch*.

Medwin, who prints (*Conversations*, 1824, pp. 234-238) what purports to be the prose sketch of a Second Part of *Heaven and Earth* (he says that Byron compared it to Coleridge's promised conclusion of *Christabel*—"that, and nothing more!"), detects two other strains in the composition of the "Mystery," an echo of Goethe's Faust and a "movement" which recalls the *Eumenides* of Æschylus. Byron told Murray that his fourth tragedy was "more lyrical and Greek" than he at first intended, and there is no doubt that with the *Prometheus Vincetus* he was familiar, if not at first hand, at least through the medium of Shelley's rendering. But apart from the "Greek choruses," which "Shelley made such a fuss about," Byron was acquainted with, and was not untouched by, the metrical peculiarities of the *Curse of Kehama*, and might have traced a kinship between his "angels" and Southey's "Glendoveers," to say nothing of their collaterals, the "glumms" and "gawreys" of *Peter Wilkins* (see notes to Southey's *Curse of Kehama*, Canto VI., *Poetical Works*, 1838, viii. 231-233).

Goethe was interested in *Heaven and Earth*. "He preferred it," says Crabb Robinson (*Diary*, 1869, ii. 434), "to

all the other serious poems of Byron. . . . 'A bishop,' he exclaimed, though it sounded almost like satire, 'might have written it.' Goethe must have been thinking of a *German* bishop! (For his daughter-in-law's translation of the speeches of Anah and Aholibamah with their seraph-lovers see *Goethe-Fahrbuch*, 1899, pp. 18-21 [Letters, 1901, v Appendix II. p. 518].)

*Heaven and Earth* was reviewed by Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*, February, 1823, vol. 38, pp. 42-48; by Wilson in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, January, 1823, vol. xiii. pp. 71, 72; and in the *New Monthly Magazine*, N.S. 1823, vol. 7, pp. 353-358.







*Goethe.*







DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



ANGELS.

SAMIASA.

AZAZIEL.

RAPHAEL, THE ARCHANGEL.

MEN.

NOAH AND HIS SONS.

IRAD.

JAPHET.

WOMEN.

ANAH.

AHOLIBAMAH.



*Chorus of Spirits of the Earth.—Chorus of Mortals.*

# HEAVEN AND EARTH.

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## PART I.

SCENE I.—*A woody and mountainous district near Mount Ararat.—Time, midnight.*

*Enter ANAH and AHOLIBAMAH.*<sup>1</sup>

*Anah.* OUR father sleeps: it is the hour when they  
Who love us are accustomed to descend  
Through the deep clouds o'er rocky Ararat:—  
How my heart beats!

*Aho.* Let us proceed upon  
Our invocation.

*Anah.* But the stars are hidden.  
I tremble.

*Aho.* So do I, but not with fear  
Of aught save their delay.

*Anah.* My sister, though  
I love Azazel more than—oh, too much!  
What was I going to say? my heart grows impious.

*Aho.* And where is the impiety of loving  
Celestial natures? 10

*Anah.* But, Aholibamah,  
I love our God less since his angel loved me:  
This cannot be of good; and though I know not  
That I do wrong, I feel a thousand fears

1. [Aholibamah ("tent of the highest") was daughter of Anah (a Hivite clan-name), the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife, *Gen.* xxxvi. 14. Irad was the son of Enoch, and grandson of Cain, *Gen.* iv. 18.]

*Aho.* Samiasa !  
Wheresoe'er  
Thou rulest in the upper air—  
Or warring with the spirits who may dare  
Dispute with him  
Who made all empires, empire ; or recalling  
Some wandering star, which shoots through the abyss,  
Whose tenants dying, while their world is falling,  
Share the dim destiny of clay in this ;  
Or joining with the inferior cherubim, 90  
Thou deignest to partake their hymn—  
Samiasa !  
I call thee, I await thee, and I love thee.  
Many may worship thee, that will I not :  
If that thy spirit down to mine may move thee,  
Descend and share my lot !  
Though I be formed of clay,  
And thou of beams  
More bright than those of day  
On Eden's streams, 100  
Thine immortality can not repay  
With love more warm than mine  
My love. There is a ray  
In me, which, though forbidden yet to shine,  
I feel was lighted at thy God's and thine.  
It may be hidden long : death and decay  
Our mother Eve bequeathed us—but my heart  
Defies it : though this life must pass away,  
Is *that* a cause for thee and me to part ?  
Thou art immortal—so am I : I feel— 110  
I feel my immortality o'ersweep  
All pains, all tears, all fears, and peal,  
Like the eternal thunders of the deep,  
Into my ears this truth—"Thou liv'st for ever !"  
But if it be in joy  
I know not, nor would know ;  
That secret rests with the Almighty giver,  
Who folds in clouds the founts of bliss and woe.  
But thee and me he never can destroy ;  
Change us he may, but not o'erwhelm ; we are 120  
Of as eternal essence, and must war

With him if he will war with us ; with *thee*  
 I can share all things, even immortal sorrow ;  
 For thou hast ventured to share life with *me*,  
 And shall I shrink from thine eternity ?

No ! though the serpent's sting should pierce me  
 thorough,

And thou thyself wert like the serpent, coil  
 Around me still ! and I will smile,

And curse thee not ; but hold  
 Thee in as warm a fold

130

As — but descend, and prove  
 A mortal's love

For an immortal. If the skies contain  
 More joy than thou canst give and take, remain !

*Anah.* Sister ! sister ! I view them winging  
 Their bright way through the parted night.

*Aho.* The clouds from off their pinions flinging,  
 As though they bore to-morrow's light.

*Anah.* But if our father see the sight !

*Aho.* He would but deem it was the moon  
 Rising unto some sorcerer's tune

140

An hour too soon.<sup>1</sup>

*Anah.* They come ! *he* comes ! — Azazel !

*Aho.*

Haste

To meet them ! Oh ! for wings to bear  
 My spirit, while they hover there,

To Samiasa's breast !

*Anah.* Lo ! they have kindled all the west,  
 Like a returning sunset ; — lo !

On Ararat's late secret crest  
 A mild and many-coloured bow,

150

1. ["The adepts of Incantation . . . enter the realms of air, and by their spells they scatter the clouds, they gather the clouds, they still the storm. . . . We may adduce Ovid (*Amor.*, bk. ii., *El.*, i. 23), who says, 'Charmers draw down the horns of the blood-red moon,' . . . Here it is to be observed that in the opinion of simple-minded persons, the moon could be actually drawn down from heaven. So Aristophanes says (*Clouds*, lines 739, 740), 'If I should purchase a Thessalian witch, and draw down the moon by night ;' and Claudian (*In Rufin.*, bk. i. 145), 'I know by what spell the Thessalian sorceress snatches away the lunar beam.'" — *Magic Incantations*, by Christianus Pazig (circ. 1700), edited by Edmund Goldsmid, F.R.H.S., F.S.A. (Scot.), 1886, pp. 30, 31. See, too, Virgil, *Eclogues*, viii. 69, "Carmina vel cœlo possunt deducere Lunam."]

The remnant of their flashing path,  
 Now shines ! and now, behold ! it hath  
 Returned to night, as rippling foam,  
 Which the Leviathan hath lashed  
 From his unfathomable home,  
 When sporting on the face of the calm deep,  
 Subsides soon after he again hath dashed  
 Down, down, to where the Ocean's fountains sleep.

*Aho.* They have touched earth ! Samiasa !

*Anah.*

My Azaziel !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Enter IRAD and JAPHET.*

*Irads.* Despond not : wherefore wilt thou wander thus  
 To add thy silence to the silent night,  
 And lift thy tearful eye unto the stars ?  
 They cannot aid thee.

*Japh.* But they soothe me—now  
 Perhaps she looks upon them as I look.  
 Methinks a being that is beautiful  
 Becometh more so as it looks on beauty,  
 The eternal beauty of undying things.  
 Oh, Anah !

*Irads.* But she loves thee not.

*Japh.*

Alas !

*Irads.* And proud Aholibamah spurns me also.

10

*Japh.* I feel for thee too.

*Irads.* Let her keep her pride,  
 Mine hath enabled me to bear her scorn :  
 It may be, time too will avenge it.

*Japh.* Canst thou  
 Find joy in such a thought ?

*Irads.* Nor joy nor sorrow.  
 I loved her well ; I would have loved her better,  
 Had love been met with love : as 'tis, I leave her  
 To brighter destinies, if so she deems them.

*Japh.* What destinies ?

*Irads.* I have some cause to think  
 She loves another.

*Japh.* Anah !

*Irads.* No ; her sister.

*Japh.* What other ?

*Irads.* That I know not ; but her air, 20  
If not her words, tells me she loves another.

*Japh.* Aye, but not Anah : she but loves her God.

*Irads.* Whate'er she loveth, so she loves thee not,  
What can it profit thee ?

*Japh.* True, nothing ; but  
I love.

*Irads.* And so did I.

*Japh.* And now thou lov'st not,  
Or think'st thou lov'st not, art thou happier ?

*Irads.* Yes.

*Japh.* I pity thee.

*Irads.* Me ! why ?

*Japh.* For being happy,  
Deprived of that which makes my misery.

*Irads.* I take thy taunt as part of thy distemper,  
And would not feel as thou dost for more shekels 30  
Than all our father's herds would bring, if weighed  
Against the metal of the sons of Cain—<sup>1</sup>  
The yellow dust they try to barter with us,  
As if such useless and discoloured trash,  
The refuse of the earth, could be received  
For milk, and wool, and flesh, and fruits, and all  
Our flocks and wilderness afford.—Go, Japhet,  
Sigh to the stars, as wolves howl to the moon—  
I must back to my rest.

*Japh.* And so would I  
If I could rest.

*Irads.* Thou wilt not to our tents then ? 40

*Japh.* No, *Irads* ; I will to the cavern,<sup>2</sup> whose  
Mouth they say opens from the internal world,

1. ["Tubal-Cain [the seventh in descent from Cain] was an instructor of every artificer of brass and iron" (*Gen.* iv. 22). According to the *Book of Enoch*, cap. viii., it was "Azazel," one of the "sons of the heavens," who "taught men to make swords, and knives, and skins, and coats of mail, and made known to them metals, and the art of working them, bracelets and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyebrows, and the most costly and choicest stones, and all colouring tincture, so that the world was changed."]

2. [*Vide post*, p. 294.]

To let the inner spirits of the earth  
Forth when they walk its surface.

*Irād.*

Wherefore so ?

What wouldst thou there ?

*Japh.*

Soothe further my sad spirit  
With gloom as sad : it is a hopeless spot,  
And I am hopeless.

*Irād.*

But 'tis dangerous ;  
Strange sounds and sights have peopled it with terrors.  
I must go with thee.

*Japh.*

Irād, no ; believe me  
I feel no evil thought, and fear no evil.

50

*Irād.* But evil things will be thy foe the more  
As not being of them : turn thy steps aside,  
Or let mine be with thine.

*Japh.*

No, neither, Irād ;  
I must proceed alone.

*Irād.*

Then peace be with thee !

[*Exit IRAD.*]

*Japh. (solus).* Peace ! I have sought it where it should  
be found,

In love—with love, too, which perhaps deserved it ;  
And, in its stead, a heaviness of heart,  
A weakness of the spirit, listless days,  
And nights inexorable to sweet sleep  
Have come upon me. Peace ! what peace ? the calm  
Of desolation, and the stillness of  
The untrodden forest, only broken by  
The sweeping tempest through its groaning boughs ;  
Such is the sullen or the fitful state  
Of my mind overworn. The Earth's grown wicked,  
And many signs and portents have proclaimed  
A change at hand, and an o'erwhelming doom  
To perishable beings. Oh, my Anah !  
When the dread hour denounced shall open wide  
The fountains of the deep, how mightest thou  
Have lain within this bosom, folded from  
The elements ; this bosom, which in vain  
Hath beat for thee, and then will beat more vainly,  
While thine—Oh, God ! at least remit to her  
Thy wrath ! for she is pure amidst the failing

70

As a star in the clouds, which cannot quench,  
Although they obscure it for an hour. My Anah !  
How would I have adored thee, but thou wouldst not ;  
And still would I redeem thee—see thee live  
When Ocean is earth's grave, and, unopposed 80  
By rock or shallow, the Leviathan,  
Lord of the shoreless sea and watery world,  
Shall wonder at his boundlessness of realm. [*Exit* JAPHET.]

*Enter* NOAH and SHEM.

*Noah.* Where is thy brother Japhet ?

*Shem.*

He went forth,

According to his wont, to meet with Irad,  
He said ; but, as I fear, to bend his steps  
Towards Anah's tents, round which he hovers nightly,  
Like a dove round and round its pillaged nest ;  
Or else he walks the wild up to the cavern  
Which opens to the heart of Ararat. 90

*Noah.* What doth he there ? It is an evil spot  
Upon an earth all evil ; for things worse  
Than even wicked men resort there : he  
Still loves this daughter of a fated race,  
Although he could not wed her if she loved him,  
And that she doth not. Oh, the unhappy hearts  
Of men ! that one of my blood, knowing well  
The destiny and evil of these days,  
And that the hour approacheth, should indulge  
In such forbidden yearnings ! Lead the way ; 100  
He must be sought for !

*Shem.*

Go not forward, father :

I will seek Japhet.

*Noah.*

Do not fear for me :

All evil things are powerless on the man  
Selected by Jehovah.—Let us on.

*Shem.* To the tents of the father of the sisters ?

*Noah.* No ; to the cavern of the Caucasus.

[*Exeunt* NOAH and SHEM.]



SCENE III.—*The mountains.—A cavern,<sup>1</sup> and the rocks of Caucasus.*

*Japh. (solus).* Ye wilds, that look eternal ; and thou  
 cave,  
 Which seem'st unfathomable ; and ye mountains,  
 So varied and so terrible in beauty ;  
 Here, in your rugged majesty of rocks  
 And toppling trees that twine their roots with stone <sup>2</sup>  
 In perpendicular places, where the foot  
 Of man would tremble, could he reach them—yes,  
 Ye look eternal ! Yet, in a few days,  
 Perhaps even hours, ye will be changed, rent, hurled  
 Before the mass of waters ; and yon cave, 10  
 Which seems to lead into a lower world,  
 Shall have its depths searched by the sweeping wave,  
 And dolphins gambol in the lion's den !  
 And man — Oh, men ! my fellow-beings ! Who  
 Shall weep above your universal grave,  
 Save I ? Who shall be left to weep ? My kinsmen,  
 Alas ! what am I better than ye are,  
 That I must live beyond ye ? Where shall be

1. [Byron's knowledge of Mount Ararat was probably derived from the following passage in Tournefort: "It is a most frightful sight ; David might well say such sort of places show the grandeur of the Lord. One can't but tremble to behold it ; and to look on the horrible precipices ever so little will make the head turn round. The noise made by a vast number of crows [hence the 'rushing sound,' *vide post*, p. 295], who are continually flying from one side to the other, has something in it very frightful. To form any idea of this place you must imagine one of the highest mountains in the world opening its bosom, only to show the most horrible spectacle that can be thought of. All the precipices are perpendicular, and the extremities are rough and blackish, as if a smoke came out of the sides and smutted them."—*A Voyage in the Levant*, by M. [Joseph Pitton de] Tournefort, 1741, iii. 205, 206.

Kitto also describes this "vast chasm," which contained "an enormous mass of ice, which seems to have fallen from a cliff that overhangs the ice" (*Travels in Persia*, 1846, i. 34) ; but Professor Friedrich Parrot, who was the first to ascend Mount Ararat, does not enlarge upon the "abyss" or chasm.—*Journey to Ararat*, translated by W. D. Cowley, 1845, p. 134.]

2. [Compare the description of the "roots like snakes," which "wind out from rock and sand," in the scene on the Hartz Mountains in Goethe's *Faust*.]

The pleasant places where I thought of Anah  
While I had hope ? or the more savage haunts, 20  
Scarce less beloved, where I despaired for her ?  
And can it be !—Shall yon exulting peak,  
Whose glittering top is like a distant star,  
Lie low beneath the boiling of the deep ?  
No more to have the morning sun break forth,  
And scatter back the mists in floating folds  
From its tremendous brow ? no more to have  
Day's broad orb drop behind its head at even,  
Leaving it with a crown of many hues ?  
No more to be the beacon of the world, 30  
For angels to alight on, as the spot  
Nearest the stars ? And can those words "*no more*"  
Be meant for thee, for all things, save for us,  
And the predestined creeping things reserved  
By my sire to Jehovah's bidding ? May  
*He* preserve *them*, and I *not* have the power  
To snatch the loveliest of earth's daughters from  
A doom which even some serpent, with his mate,  
Shall 'scape to save his kind to be prolonged,  
To hiss and sting through some emerging world, 40  
Reeking and dank from out the slime, whose ooze  
Shall slumber o'er the wreck of this, until  
The salt morass subside into a sphere  
Beneath the sun, and be the monument,  
The sole and undistinguished sepulchre,  
Of yet quick myriads of all life ? How much  
Breath will be stilled at once ! All beauteous world !  
So young, so marked out for destruction, I  
With a cleft heart look on thee day by day,  
And night by night, thy numbered days and nights. 50  
I cannot save thee, cannot save even her  
Whose love had made me love thee more ; but as  
A portion of thy dust, I cannot think  
Upon thy coming doom without a feeling  
Such as—Oh God ! and canst thou— [He pauses.

[A rushing sound from the cavern is heard, and shouts  
of laughter—afterwards a Spirit passes.

Japh.

In the name

Of the Most High, what art thou ?

*Spirit (laughs).* Ha ! ha ! ha !<sup>1</sup>

*Japh.* By all that earth holds holiest, speak !

*Spirit (laughs).* Ha ! ha !

*Japh.* By the approaching deluge ! by the earth  
Which will be strangled by the ocean ! by  
The deep which will lay open all her fountains ! 60  
The heaven which will convert her clouds to seas,  
And the Omnipotent who makes and crushes !  
Thou unknown, terrible, and indistinct,  
Yet awful Thing of Shadows, speak to me !  
Why dost thou laugh that horrid laugh ?

*Spirit.* Why weep'st thou ?

*Japh.* For earth and all her children.

*Spirit.* Ha ! ha ! ha !  
[*Spirit vanishes.*]

*Japh.* How the fiend mocks the tortures of a world,  
The coming desolation of an orb,  
On which the sun shall rise and warm no life !  
How the earth sleeps ! and all that in it is 70  
Sleep too upon the very eve of death !  
Why should they wake to meet it ? What are here,  
Which look like death in life, and speak like things  
Born ere this dying world ? They come like clouds !

[*Various Spirits pass from the cavern.*]

*Spirit.* Rejoice !

The abhorred race

Which could not keep in Eden their high place,

But listened to the voice

Of knowledge without power,

Are nigh the hour, 80

Of Death !

Not slow, not single, not by sword, nor sorrow,

Nor years, nor heart-break, nor Time's sapping  
motion,

1. [Medwin (*Conversations*, 1824, p. 233) compares the laughter of the fiends in the cave of Caucasus with the snoring of the Furies in the *Eumenides* of Æschylus—

ῥέγκουσι δ' οὐ πλαστοῖσι φυσιδμασιν (line 53).  
("Their snoring nostrils blow fearsome breath.")

There is a closer parallel with—

Γελᾷ δὲ δαίμων ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θερμῷ (line 560).  
("The spirit mocketh the headlong soul.")]

Shall they drop off. Behold their last to-morrow !  
Earth shall be Ocean !

And no breath,  
Save of the winds, be on the unbounded wave !  
Angels shall tire their wings, but find no spot :  
Not even a rock from out the liquid grave

Shall lift its point to save, 90  
Or show the place where strong Despair hath died,  
After long looking o'er the ocean wide

For the expected ebb which cometh not :

All shall be void,

Destroyed !<sup>1</sup>

Another element shall be the lord

Of life, and the abhorred

Children of dust be quenched ; and of each hue  
Of earth nought left but the unbroken blue ;

And of the variegated mountain 100

Shall nought remain

Unchanged, or of the level plain ;

Cedar and pine shall lift their tops in vain :

All merged within the universal fountain,

Man, earth, and fire, shall die,

And sea and sky

Look vast and lifeless in the eternal eye.

Upon the foam

Who shall erect a home ?

*Japh. (coming forward).* My sire ! 110

Earth's seed shall not expire ;

Only the evil shall be put away

From day.

Avaunt ! ye exulting demons of the waste !

Who howl your hideous joy

When God destroys whom you dare not destroy :

Hence ! haste !

Back to your inner caves !

Until the waves

Shall search you in your secret place, 120

1. [Matthew Arnold, *Poetry of Byron*, 1881, xiv., xv., quotes this line in proof of Byron's barbarian insensibility "to the true artist's fine passion for the correct use and consummate management of words."]

And drive your sullen race  
Forth, to be rolled upon the tossing winds,  
In restless wretchedness along all space !  
*Spirit.* Son of the saved !  
When thou and thine have braved  
The wide and warring element ;  
When the great barrier of the deep is rent,  
Shall thou and thine be good or happy ?—No !  
Thy new world and new race shall be of woe—  
Less goodly in their aspect, in their years 130  
Less than the glorious giants, who  
Yet walk the world in pride,  
The Sons of Heaven by many a mortal bride.  
Thine shall be nothing of the past, save tears !  
And art thou not ashamed  
Thus to survive,  
And eat, and drink, and wive ?  
With a base heart so far subdued and tamed,  
As even to hear this wide destruction named,  
Without such grief and courage, as should rather 140  
Bid thee await the world-dissolving wave,  
Than seek a shelter with thy favoured father,  
And build thy city o'er the drowned earth's grave ?  
Who would outlive their kind,  
Except the base and blind ?  
Mine  
Hateth thine  
As of a different order in the sphere,  
But not our own.  
There is not one who hath not left a throne 150  
Vacant in heaven to dwell in darkness here,  
Rather than see his mates endure alone.  
Go, wretch ! and give  
A life like thine to other wretches—live !  
And when the annihilating waters roar  
Above what they have done,  
Envy the giant patriarchs then no more,  
And scorn thy sire as the surviving one !  
Thyself for being his son !

*Chorus of Spirits issuing from the cavern.*

Rejoice ! 160  
No more the human voice  
Shall vex our joys in middle air  
With prayer ;  
No more  
Shall they adore ;  
And we, who ne'er for ages have adored  
The prayer-exacting Lord,  
To whom the omission of a sacrifice  
Is vice ;  
We, we shall view the deep's salt sources poured 170  
Until one element shall do the work  
Of all in chaos ; until they,  
The creatures proud of their poor clay,  
Shall perish, and their bleached bones shall lurk  
In caves, in dens, in clefts of mountains, where  
The deep shall follow to their latest lair ;  
Where even the brutes, in their despair,  
Shall cease to prey on man and on each other,  
And the striped tiger shall lie down to die  
Beside the lamb, as though he were his brother ; 180  
Till all things shall be as they were,  
Silent and uncreated, save the sky :  
While a brief truce  
Is made with Death, who shall forbear  
The little remnant of the past creation,  
To generate new nations for his use ;  
This remnant, floating o'er the undulation  
Of the subsiding deluge, from its slime,  
When the hot sun hath baked the reeking soil  
Into a world, shall give again to Time 190  
New beings—years, diseases, sorrow, crime—  
With all companionship of hate and toil,  
Until——  
*Japh. (interrupting them).* The eternal Will  
Shall deign to expound this dream  
Of good and evil ; and redeem  
Unto himself all times, all things ;  
And, gathered under his almighty wings,

Abolish Hell !

And to the expiated Earth

Restore the beauty of her birth, 200

Her Eden in an endless paradise,

Where man no more can fall as once he fell,

And even the very demons shall do well !

*Spirits.* And when shall take effect this wondrous spell ?

*Japh.* When the Redeemer cometh ; first in pain,  
And then in glory.

*Spirit.* Meantime still struggle in the mortal chain,  
Till Earth wax hoary ;

War with yourselves, and Hell, and Heaven, in vain,

Until the clouds look gory 210

With the blood reeking from each battle-plain ;

New times, new climes, new arts, new men ; but still,

The same old tears, old crimes, and oldest ill,

Shall be amongst your race in different forms ;

But the same moral storms

Shall oversweep the future, as the waves

In a few hours the glorious giants' graves.<sup>1</sup>

### *Chorus of Spirits.*

Brethren, rejoice !

Mortal, farewell !

Hark ! hark ! already we can hear the voice 220

Of growing Ocean's gloomy swell ;

The winds, too, plume their piercing wings ;

The clouds have nearly filled their springs ;

The fountains of the great deep shall be broken,

And heaven set wide her windows ;<sup>2</sup> while mankind

View, unacknowledged, each tremendous token—

Still, as they were from the beginning, blind.

We hear the sound they cannot hear,

The mustering thunders of the threatening sphere ;

Yet a few hours their coming is delayed ; 230

1. "[And] there were giants in the earth in those days ; and . . . after, . . . mighty men, which were of old, men of renown."—*Genesis* [vi. 4].

2. "The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."—*Genesis* [vii. 11].

Their flashing banners, folded still on high,  
Yet undisplayed,  
Save to the Spirit's all-pervading eye.  
Howl ! howl ! oh Earth !  
Thy death is nearer than thy recent birth ;  
Tremble, ye mountains, soon to shrink below  
The Ocean's overflow !  
The wave shall break upon your cliffs ; and shells,  
The little shells, of ocean's least things be  
Deposed where now the eagle's offspring dwells—<sup>1</sup> 240  
How shall he shriek o'er the remorseless sea !  
And call his nestlings up with fruitless yell,  
Unanswered, save by the encroaching swell ;—  
While man shall long in vain for his broad wings,  
The wings which could not save :—  
Where could he rest them, while the whole space brings  
Nought to his eye beyond the deep, his grave ?  
Brethren, rejoice !  
And loudly lift each superhuman voice—  
All die, 250  
Save the slight remnant of Seth's seed—  
The seed of Seth,  
Exempt for future sorrow's sake from death.  
But of the sons of Cain  
None shall remain ;  
And all his goodly daughters  
Must lie beneath the desolating waters ;  
Or, floating upward, with their long hair laid  
Along the wave, the cruel heaven upbraid,  
Which would not spare 260  
Beings even in death so fair.  
It is decreed,  
All die !  
And to the universal human cry  
The universal silence shall succeed !  
Fly, brethren, fly !  
But still rejoice !  
We fell !

1. [Byron falls in with the popular theory as to the existence of fossil remains of marine animals at a height above the level of the sea. The "deluge" accounted for what was otherwise inexplicable.]



They fall !

So perish all

270

These petty foes of Heaven who shrink from Hell !

[*The Spirits disappear, soaring upwards.*

*Japh. (solus).* God hath proclaimed the destiny of earth ;

My father's ark of safety hath announced it ;

The very demons shriek it from their caves ;

The scroll<sup>1</sup> of Enoch prophesied it long

1. The book of Enoch, preserved by the Ethiopians, is said by them to be anterior to the flood.

[Some fragments of the *Book of Enoch* (*vide ante*, Introduction to *Heaven and Earth*, p. 281), which were included by Georgius Syncellus (a Byzantine writer of the eighth century A.D.) in his *Chronographia*, pp. 11, 26 (*Corpus Script. Hist. Byzantinæ*, 1829, i. 20), were printed by J. J. Scaliger in 1606. They were, afterwards, included (i. 347-354) in the *Spicilegium SS. Patrum* of Joannes Ernestus Græbius, which was published at Oxford in 1714. A year after (1715) one of the fragments was "made English," and published under the title of *The History of the Angels and their Gallantry with the Daughters of Men*, written by Enoch the Patriarch.

In 1785 James Bruce, the traveller, discovered three MSS. of the *Book of Enoch*. One he conveyed to the library at Paris ; a second MS. he presented to the Bodleian Library at Oxford (*Travels*, ii. 422, 8vo ed. 1805). In 1801 an article entitled, "Notice du Livre d'Enoch," was contributed by Silvestre de Sacy to the *Magasin Encyclopédique* (An. vi. tom. i. p. 369) ; and in 1821 Richard Laurence, LL.D., published a translation "from the Ethiopic MS. in the Bodleian Library." This was the first translation of the book as a whole.

The following extracts, which were evidently within Byron's recollection when he planned *Heaven and Earth*, are taken from *The Book of Enoch*, translated from Professor Dillman's Ethiopic Text, by R. H. Charles, Oxford, 1892 :—

"Chap. vi. [1. And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied in those days that beautiful and comely daughters were born unto them. [2. And the angels, the sons of the Heavens, saw and lusted after them, and spake one to another, 'Come now, let us choose us wives from among the children of men, and beget children.' [3. And Semjâzâ, who was the leader, spake unto them : 'I fear ye will not indeed agree to do this deed.' . . . [6. And they descended in the days of Jared on the summit of Mount Hermon. . . .

"Chap. viii. [1. And Azâzël taught men to make swords, etc.

"Chap. x. Then spake the Most High, the Great, the Holy One, and sent Arsajâlîûr (= Uriel) to the son of Lamech, and said to him, 'Tell him in My Name to hide thyself !' and reveal to him that the end is approaching ; for the whole earth will be destroyed, and a deluge will presently cover up the whole earth, and all that is in it will be destroyed. [3. And now instruct him that he may escape, as his seed may be preserved for all generations. [4. And again the Lord spake to Rafael ; Bind Azâzël hand and foot, and place him in darkness ; make an opening in the desert which is in Dudâël and place him therein. [5. And place upon him rough and ragged rocks," etc.]

In silent books, which, in their silence, say  
More to the mind than thunder to the ear :  
And yet men listened not, nor listen ; but  
Walk darkling to their doom : which, though so nigh,  
Shakes them no more in their dim disbelief, 280  
Than their last cries shall shake the Almighty purpose,  
Or deaf obedient Ocean, which fulfils it.  
No sign yet hangs its banner in the air ;  
The clouds are few, and of their wonted texture ;  
The Sun will rise upon the Earth's last day  
As on the fourth day of creation, when  
God said unto him, " Shine !" and he broke forth  
Into the dawn, which lighted not the yet  
Unformed forefather of mankind—but roused  
Before the human orison the earlier 290  
Made and far sweeter voices of the birds,  
Which in the open firmament of heaven  
Have wings like angels, and like them salute  
Heaven first each day before the Adamites :  
Their matins now draw nigh—the east is kindling—  
And they will sing ! and day will break ! Both near,  
So near the awful close ! For these must drop  
Their outworn pinions on the deep ; and day,  
After the bright course of a few brief morrows,—  
Aye, day will rise ; but upon what ?—a chaos, 300  
Which was ere day ; and which, renewed, makes Time  
Nothing ! for, without life, what are the hours ?  
No more to dust than is Eternity  
Unto Jehovah, who created both.  
Without him, even Eternity would be  
A void : without man, Time, as made for man,  
Dies with man, and is swallowed in that deep  
Which has no fountain ; as his race will be  
Devoured by that which drowns his infant world.—  
What have we here ? Shapes of both earth and air ? 310  
No—*all* of heaven, they are so beautiful.  
I cannot trace their features ; but their forms,  
How lovelily they move along the side  
Of the grey mountain, scattering its mist !  
And after the swart savage spirits, whose  
Infernal immortality poured forth

Their impious hymn of triumph, they shall be  
 Welcome as Eden. It may be they come  
 To tell me the reprieve of our young world,  
 For which I have so often prayed.—They come ! 320  
 Anah ! oh, God ! and with her——

*Enter SAMIASA, AZAZIEL, ANAH, and AHOLIBAMAH.*

*Anah.*

Japhet !

*Sam.*

Lo !

A son of Adam !

*Aza.* What doth the earth-born here,  
 While all his race are slumbering ?

*Japh.* Angel ! what  
 Dost thou on earth when thou should'st be on high ?

*Aza.* Know'st thou not, or forget'st thou, that a part  
 Of our great function is to guard thine earth ?

*Japh.* But all good angels have forsaken earth,  
 Which is condemned ; nay, even the evil fly  
 The approaching chaos. Anah ! Anah ! my  
 In vain, and long, and still to be, beloved ! 330  
 Why walk'st thou with this Spirit, in those hours  
 When no good Spirit longer lights below ?

*Anah.* Japhet, I cannot answer thee ; yet, yet  
 Forgive me——

*Japh.* May the Heaven, which soon no more  
 Will pardon, do so ! for thou art greatly tempted.

*Aho.* Back to thy tents, insulting son of Noah !  
 We know thee not.

*Japh.* The hour may come when thou  
 May'st know me better ; and thy sister know  
 Me still the same which I have ever been.

*Sam.* Son of the patriarch, who hath ever been 340  
 Upright before his God, whate'er thy gifts,  
 And thy words seem of sorrow, mixed with wrath,  
 How have Azazel, or myself, brought on thee  
 Wrong ?

*Japh.* Wrong ! the greatest of all wrongs ! but, thou  
 Say'st well, though she be dust—I did not, could not,  
 Deserve her. Farewell, Anah ! I have said  
 That word so often ! but now say it, ne'er

To be repeated. Angel ! or whate'er  
Thou art, or must be soon, hast thou the power  
To save this beautiful—*these* beautiful  
Children of Cain ?

350

*Aza.* From what ?

*Japh.* And is it so,  
That ye too know not ? Angels ! angels ! ye  
Have shared man's sin, and, it may be, now must  
Partake his punishment ; or, at the least,  
My sorrow.

*Sam.* Sorrow ! I ne'er thought till now  
To hear an Adamite speak riddles to me.

*Japh.* And hath not the Most High expounded them ?  
Then ye are lost as they are lost.

*Aho.* So be it !  
If they love as they are loved, they will not shrink  
More to be mortal, than I would to dare  
An immortality of agonies  
With Samiasa !

360

*Anah.* Sister ! sister ! speak not  
Thus.

*Aza.* Fearest thou, my Anah ?

*Anah.* Yes, for thee :  
I would resign the greater remnant of  
This little life of mine, before one hour  
Of thine eternity should know a pang.

*Japh.* It is for *him*, then ! for the Seraph thou  
Hast left me ! That is nothing, if thou hast not  
Left thy God too ! for unions like to these,  
Between a mortal and an immortal, cannot  
Be happy or be hallowed. We are sent  
Upon the earth to toil and die ; and they  
Are made to minister on high unto  
The Highest : but if he can *save* thee, soon  
The hour will come in which celestial aid  
Alone can do so.

370

*Anah.* Ah ! he speaks of Death.

*Sam.* Of death to *us* ! and those who are with us !  
But that the man seems full of sorrow, I  
Could smile.

*Japh.* I grieve not for myself, nor fear.

I am safe, not for my own deserts, but those  
Of a well-doing sire, who hath been found  
Righteous enough to save his children. Would  
His power was greater of redemption ! or  
That by exchanging my own life for hers,  
Who could alone have made mine happy, she,  
The last and loveliest of Cain's race, could share  
The ark which shall receive a remnant of  
The seed of Seth !

*Aho.* And dost thou think that we,  
With Cain's, the eldest born of Adam's, blood  
Warm in our veins,—strong Cain ! who was begotten  
In Paradise,<sup>1</sup>—would mingle with Seth's children ? 391  
Seth, the last offspring of old Adam's dotage ?  
No, not to save all Earth, were Earth in peril !  
Our race hath always dwelt apart from thine  
From the beginning, and shall do so ever.

*Japh.* I did not speak to thee, Aholibamah !  
Too much of the forefather whom thou vauntest  
Has come down in that haughty blood which springs  
From him who shed the first, and that a brother's !  
But thou, my Anah ! let me call thee mine, 400  
Albeit thou art not ; 'tis a word I cannot  
Part with, although I must from thee. My Anah !  
Thou who dost rather make me dream that Abel  
Had left a daughter, whose pure pious race  
Survived in thee, so much unlike thou art  
The rest of the stern Cainites, save in beauty,  
For all of them are fairest in their favour——

*Aho. (interrupting him).* And would'st thou have her  
like our father's foe  
In mind, in soul? If *I* partook thy thought,  
And dreamed that aught of *Abel* was in *her*!— 410  
Get thee hence, son of Noah; thou makest strife.

1. [This does not correspond with Cain's own statement—

"After the fall too soon was I begotten."

*Cain*, act iii. sc. i, line 506 (*vide ante*, p. 274).

Bayle (*Hist. and Crit. Dict.*, 1735, ii. 853, art. "Eve," note B) has a great deal to say with regard to the exact date of the birth of Cain. He concludes with *Cornelius à Lapide*, who quotes *Torniellus*, "Cain genitum esse mox post expulsionem Adæ et Evæ ex Paradiso."]

*Japh.* Offspring of Cain, thy father did so !

*Aho.*

But

He slew not Seth : and what hast thou to do  
With other deeds between his God and him ?

*Japh.* Thou speakest well: his God hath judged him, and  
I had not named his deed, but that thyself  
Didst seem to glory in him, nor to shrink  
From what he had done.

*Aho.*

He was our father's father ;  
The eldest born of man, the strongest, bravest,  
And most enduring :—Shall I blush for him 420  
From whom we had our being ? Look upon  
Our race ; behold their stature and their beauty,  
Their courage, strength, and length of days——

*Japh.*

They are numbered.

*Aho.* Be it so ! but while yet their hours endure,  
I glory in my brethren and our fathers.

*Japh.* My sire and race but glory in their God,  
Anah ! and thou ?——

*Anah.*

Whate'er our God decrees,  
The God of Seth as Cain, I must obey,  
And will endeavour patiently to obey.  
But could I dare to pray in his dread hour 430  
Of universal vengeance (if such should be),  
It would not be to live, alone exempt  
Of all my house. My sister ! oh, my sister !  
What were the world, or other worlds, or all  
The brightest future, without the sweet past—  
Thy love, my father's, all the life, and all  
The things which sprang up with me, like the stars,  
Making my dim existence radiant with  
Soft lights which were not mine ? Aholibamah !  
Oh ! if there should be mercy—seek it, find it : 440  
I abhor Death, because that thou must die.

*Aho.* What, hath this dreamer, with his father's ark,  
The bugbear he hath built to scare the world,  
Shaken *my* sister ? Are *we* not the loved  
Of Seraphs ? and if we were not, must we  
Cling to a son of Noah for our lives ?  
Rather than thus——But the enthusiast dreams  
The worst of dreams, the fantasies engendered

By hopeless love and heated vigils. Who  
 Shall shake these solid mountains, this firm earth, 450  
 And bid those clouds and waters take a shape  
 Distinct from that which we and all our sires  
 Have seen them wear on their eternal way?  
 Who shall do this?

*Japh.* He whose one word produced them.

*Aho.* Who *heard* that word?

*Japh.* The universe, which leaped  
 To life before it. Ah! smilest thou still in scorn?  
 Turn to thy Seraphs: if they attest it not,  
 They are none.

*Sam.* Aholibamah, own thy God!

*Aho.* I have ever hailed our Maker, Samiasa,  
 As thine, and mine: a God of Love, not Sorrow. 460

*Japh.* Alas! what else is Love but Sorrow? Even  
 He who made earth in love had soon to grieve  
 Above its first and best inhabitants.

*Aho.* 'Tis said so.

*Japh.* It is even so.

*Enter NOAH and SHEM.*

*Noah.* Japhet! What  
 Dost thou here with these children of the wicked?  
 Dread'st thou not to partake their coming doom?

*Japh.* Father, it cannot be a sin to seek  
 To save an earth-born being; and behold,  
 These are not of the sinful, since they have  
 The fellowship of angels.

*Noah.* These are they, then, 470  
 Who leave the throne of God, to take them wives  
 From out the race of Cain; the sons of Heaven,  
 Who seek Earth's daughters for their beauty?

*Aza.* Patriarch!  
 Thou hast said it.

*Noah.* Woe, woe, woe to such communion!  
 Has not God made a barrier between Earth  
 And Heaven, and limited each, kind to kind?

*Sam.* Was not man made in high Jehovah's image?  
 Did God not love what he had made? And what

Do we but imitate and emulate  
His love unto created love?

*Noah.*

I am

480

But man, and was not made to judge mankind,  
Far less the sons of God ; but as our God  
Has deigned to commune with me, and reveal  
*His* judgments, I reply, that the descent  
Of Seraphs from their everlasting seat  
Unto a perishable and perishing,  
Even on the very *eve* of *perishing*,<sup>1</sup> world,  
Cannot be good.

*Aza.*

What ! though it were to save ?

*Noah.* Not ye in all your glory can redeem  
What he who made you glorious hath condemned. 490  
Were your immortal mission safety, 'twould  
Be general, not for two, though beautiful ;  
And beautiful they are, but not the less  
Condemned.

*Japh.*

Oh, father ! say it not.

*Noah.*

Son ! son !

If that thou wouldst avoid their doom, forget  
That they exist : they soon shall cease to be,  
While thou shalt be the sire of a new world,  
And better.

*Japh.*

Let me die with *this*, and *them* !

*Noah.* Thou *shouldst* for such a thought, but shalt  
not : he

Who *can*, redeems thee.

*Sam.*

And why him and thee, 500

More than what he, thy son, prefers to both ?

*Noah.* Ask him who made thee greater than myself  
And mine, but not less subject to his own  
Almightiness. And lo ! his mildest and  
Least to be tempted messenger appears !

*Enter RAPHAEL<sup>2</sup> the Archangel.*

*Raph.*

Spirits !

Whose seat is near the throne,

1. [Byron said that it was difficult to make Lucifer talk "like a clergyman." He contrived to make Noah talk like a street-preacher.]

2. [In the original MS. "Michael"—"I return you." says Byron]



What do ye here?  
 Is thus a Seraph's duty to be shown,  
 Now that the hour is near  
 When Earth must be alone? 510  
 Return!  
 Adore and burn,  
 In glorious homage with the elected "Seven."  
 Your place is Heaven.  
*Sam.* Raphael!  
 The first and fairest of the sons of God,  
 How long hath this been law,  
 That Earth by angels must be left untrod?  
 Earth! which oft saw 520  
 Jehovah's footsteps not disdain her sod!  
 The world he loved, and made  
 For love; and oft have we obeyed  
 His frequent mission with delighted pinions:  
 Adoring him in his least works displayed;  
 Watching this youngest star of his dominions;  
 And, as the latest birth of his great word,  
 Eager to keep it worthy of our Lord.  
 Why is thy brow severe?  
 And wherefore speak'st thou of destruction near? 530  
*Raph.* Had Samiasa and Azaziel been  
 In their true place, with the angelic choir,  
 Written in fire  
 They would have seen  
 Jehovah's late decree,  
 And not enquired their Maker's breath of me:  
 But ignorance must ever be  
 A part of sin;  
 And even the Spirits' knowledge shall grow less  
 As they wax proud within; 540  
 For Blindness is the first-born of Excess.  
 When all good angels left the world, ye stayed,  
 Stung with strange passions, and debased  
 By mortal feelings for a mortal maid:  
 But ye are pardoned thus far, and replaced

"the revise. I have softened the part to which Gifford objected, and changed the name of Michael to Raphael, who was an angel of gentler sympathies."—July 6, 1822, *Letters*, vi. 93.]

With your pure equals. Hence ! away ! away !

Or stay,

And lose Eternity by that delay !

*Aza.* And thou ! if Earth be thus forbidden

In the decree

550

To us until this moment hidden,

Dost thou not err as we

In being here ?

*Raph.* I came to call ye back to your fit sphere,

In the great name and at the word of God,

Dear, dearest in themselves, and scarce less dear—

That which I came to do :<sup>1</sup> till now we trod

Together the eternal space ; together

Let us still walk the stars.<sup>2</sup> True, Earth must die !

Her race, returned into her womb, must wither, 560

And much which she inherits : but oh ! why

Cannot this Earth be made, or be destroyed,

Without involving ever some vast void

In the immortal ranks ? immortal still

In their immeasurable forfeiture.

Our brother Satan fell ; his burning will

Rather than longer worship dared endure !

But ye who still are pure !

Seraphs ! less mighty than that mightiest one,—

Think how he was undone !

570

And think if tempting man can compensate

For Heaven desired too late ?

Long have I warred,

Long must I war

With him who deemed it hard

To be created, and to acknowledge him

Who midst the cherubim

Made him as suns to a dependent star,

Leaving the archangels at his right hand dim.

I loved him—beautiful he was : oh, Heaven ! 580

Save *his* who made, what beauty and what power

1. [That is, "to call you back." His ministry and function of clemency were almost as dear to him as his ministry and function of adoration and obedience.]

2. [For the connection of stars with angels, see *Book of Enoch*, lxxv. i.]

Was ever like to Satan's ! Would the hour  
In which he fell could ever be forgiven !  
The wish is impious : but, oh ye !  
Yet undestroyed, be warned ! Eternity  
With him, or with his God, is in your choice :  
He hath not tempted you ; he cannot tempt  
The angels, from his further snares exempt :  
But man hath listened to his voice,  
And ye to woman's—beautiful she is, 590  
The serpent's voice less subtle than her kiss.  
The snake but vanquished dust ; but she will draw  
A second host from heaven, to break Heaven's law.  
Yet, yet, oh fly !  
Ye cannot die ;  
But they  
Shall pass away,  
While ye shall fill with shrieks the upper sky  
For perishable clay,  
Whose memory in your immortality 600  
Shall long outlast the Sun which gave them day.  
Think how your essence differeth from theirs  
In all but suffering ! why partake  
The agony to which they must be heirs—  
Born to be ploughed with years, and sown with cares,  
And reaped by Death, lord of the human soil ?  
Even had their days been left to toil their path  
Through time to dust, unshortened by God's wrath,  
Still they are Evil's prey, and Sorrow's spoil.  
*Aho.* Let them fly ! 610  
I hear the voice which says that all must die,  
Sooner than our white-bearded patriarchs died ;  
And that on high  
An ocean is prepared,  
While from below  
The deep shall rise to meet Heaven's overflow—  
Few shall be spared,  
It seems ; and, of that few, the race of Cain  
Must lift their eyes to Adam's God in vain.  
Sister ! since it is so, 620  
And the eternal Lord  
In vain would be implored

For the remission of one hour of woe,  
Let us resign even what we have adored,  
And meet the wave, as we would meet the sword,

If not unmoved, yet undismayed,  
And wailing less for us than those who shall  
Survive in mortal or immortal thrall,

And, when the fatal waters are allayed,  
Weep for the myriads who can weep no more. 630  
Fly, Seraphs ! to your own eternal shore,  
Where winds nor howl, nor waters roar.

Our portion is to die,  
And yours to live for ever :  
But which is best, a dead Eternity,  
Or living, is but known to the great Giver.

Obeys him, as we shall obey ;  
I would not keep this life of mine in clay  
An hour beyond his will ;  
Nor see ye lose a portion of his grace, 640  
For all the mercy which Seth's race  
Find still.

Fly !  
And as your pinions bear ye back to Heaven,  
Think that my love still mounts with thee on high,  
Samiasa !

And if I look up with a tearless eye,  
'Tis that an angel's bride disdains to weep,—  
Farewell ! Now rise, inexorable deep !  
*Anah.* And must we die ? 650  
And must I lose thee too,  
Azaziel ?

Oh, my heart ! my heart !  
Thy prophecies were true !  
And yet thou wert so happy too !  
The blow, though not unlooked for, falls as new :  
But yet depart !  
Ah ! why ?

Yet let me not retain thee—fly !  
My pangs can be but brief ; but thine would be 660  
Eternal, if repulsed from Heaven for me.  
Too much already hast thou deigned  
To one of Adam's race !

Our doom is sorrow : not to us alone,  
But to the Spirits who have not disdained  
To love us, cometh anguish with disgrace.  
The first who taught us knowledge hath been hurled  
From his once archangelic throne  
Into some unknown world :

And thou, Azazel ! No—

670

Thou shalt not suffer woe

For me. Away ! nor weep !

Thou canst not weep ; but yet

May'st suffer more, not weeping : then forget  
Her, whom the surges of the all-strangling deep  
Can bring no pang like this. Fly ! fly !  
Being gone, 'twill be less difficult to die.

*Japh.* Oh say not so !

Father ! and thou, archangel, thou !

Surely celestial mercy lurks below

680

That pure severe serenity of brow :

Let them not meet this sea without a shore,

Save in our ark, or let me be no more !

*Noah.* Peace, child of passion, peace !

If not within thy heart, yet with thy tongue

Do God no wrong !

Live as he wills it—die, when he ordains,  
A righteous death, unlike the seed of Cain's.

Cease, or be sorrowful in silence ; cease

To weary Heaven's ear with thy selfish plaint.

690

Wouldst thou have God commit a sin for thee ?

Such would it be

To alter his intent

For a mere mortal sorrow. Be a man !

And bear what Adam's race must bear, and can.

*Japh.* Aye, father ! but when they are gone,

And we are all alone,

Floating upon the azure desert, and

The depth beneath us hides our own dear land,

And dearer, silent friends and brethren, all

700

Buried in its immeasurable breast,

Who, who, our tears, our shrieks, shall then command ?

Can we in Desolation's peace have rest ?

Oh God ! be thou a God, and spare

Yet while 'tis time !  
Renew not Adam's fall :  
Mankind were then but twain,  
But they are numerous now as are the waves  
And the tremendous rain,  
Whose drops shall be less thick than would their graves,  
Were graves permitted to the seed of Cain. 711

*Noah.* Silence, vain boy ! each word of thine 's a crime.  
Angel ! forgive this stripling's fond despair.

*Raph.* Seraphs ! these mortals speak in passion : Ye !  
Who are, or should be, passionless and pure,  
May now return with me.

*Sam.* It may not be :  
We have chosen, and will endure.

*Raph.* Say'st thou ?

*Aza.* He hath said it, and I say, Amen !

*Raph.* Again !  
Then from this hour, 720  
Shorn as ye are of all celestial power,  
And aliens from your God,  
Farewell !

*Japh.* Alas ! where shall they dwell ?  
Hark, hark ! Deep sounds, and deeper still,  
Are howling from the mountain's bosom :  
There 's not a breath of wind upon the hill,  
Yet quivers every leaf, and drops each blossom :  
Earth groans as if beneath a heavy load.

*Noah.* Hark, hark ! the sea-birds cry ! 730  
In clouds they overspread the lurid sky,  
And hover round the mountain, where before  
Never a white wing, wetted by the wave,  
Yet dared to soar,  
Even when the waters waxed too fierce to brave.  
Soon it shall be their only shore,  
And then, no more !

*Japh.* The sun ! the sun !<sup>1</sup>  
He riseth, but his better light is gone ;  
And a black circle, bound 740  
His glaring disk around,  
Proclaims Earth's last of summer days hath shone !

1. [Compare *Darkness*, lines 2-5, *Poetical Works*, 1891, iv. 42, 43.]

The clouds return into the hues of night,  
Save where their brazen-coloured edges streak  
The verge where brighter morns were wont to break.

*Noah.* And lo ! yon flash of light,  
The distant thunder's harbinger, appears !

It cometh ! hence, away !  
Leave to the elements their evil prey !  
Hence to where our all-hallowed ark uprears 750  
Its safe and wreckless sides !

*Japh.* Oh, father, stay !  
Leave not my Anah to the swallowing tides !

*Noah.* Must we not leave all life to such ? Begone !

*Japh.* Not I.

*Noah.* Then die

With them !

How darest thou look on that prophetic sky,  
And seek to save what all things now condemn,  
In overwhelming unison 760  
With just Jehovah's wrath !

*Japh.* Can rage and justice join in the same path ?

*Noah.* Blasphemer ! darest thou murmur even now !

*Raph.* Patriarch, be still a father ! smooth thy brow :  
Thy son, despite his folly, shall not sink :

He knows not what he says, yet shall not drink

With sobs the salt foam of the swelling waters ;

But be, when passion passeth, good as thou,

Nor perish like Heaven's children with man's daughters.

*Aho.* The tempest cometh ; heaven and earth unite

For the annihilation of all life. 771

Unequal is the strife

Between our strength and the Eternal Might !

*Sam.* But ours is with thee ; we will bear ye far

To some untroubled star,

Where thou, and Anah, shalt partake our lot :

And if thou dost not weep for thy lost earth,

Our forfeit Heaven shall also be forgot.

*Anah.* Oh ! my dear father's tents, my place of birth,  
And mountains, land, and woods ! when ye are not, 780  
Who shall dry up my tears ?

*Aza.* Thy spirit-lord.

Fear not ; though we are shut from Heaven,

Yet much is ours, whence we can not be driven.

*Raph.* Rebel ! thy words are wicked, as thy deeds  
Shall henceforth be but weak : the flaming sword,  
Which chased the first-born out of Paradise,  
Still flashes in the angelic hands.

*Aza.* It cannot slay us : threaten dust with death,  
And talk of weapons unto that which bleeds.

What are thy swords in our immortal eyes ? 790

*Raph.* The moment cometh to approve thy strength ;  
And learn at length

How vain to war with what thy God commands :  
Thy former force was in thy faith.

*Enter Mortals, flying for refuge.*

*Chorus of Mortals.*

The heavens and earth are mingling—God ! oh God !

What have we done ? Yet spare !

Hark ! even the forest beasts howl forth their prayer !

The dragon crawls from out his den,

To herd, in terror, innocent with men ;

And the birds scream their agony through air. 800

Yet, yet, Jehovah ! yet withdraw thy rod

Of wrath, and pity thine own world's despair !

Hear not man only but all nature plead !

*Raph.* Farewell, thou earth ! ye wretched sons of clay,  
I cannot, must not, aid you. 'Tis decreed !

[*Exit RAPHAEL.*

*Japh.* Some clouds sweep on as vultures for their prey,

While others, fixed as rocks, await the word

At which their wrathful vials shall be poured.

No azure more shall robe the firmament,

Nor spangled stars be glorious : Death hath risen :

In the Sun's place a pale and ghastly glare 811

Hath wound itself around the dying air.

*Aza.* Come, Anah ! quit this chaos-founded prison,

To which the elements again repair,

To turn it into what it was : beneath

The shelter of these wings thou shalt be safe,

As was the eagle's nestling once within

Its mother's.—Let the coming chaos chafe



With all its elements ! Heed not their din !  
 A brighter world than this, where thou shalt breathe 820  
 Ethereal life, will we explore :  
 These darkened clouds are not the only skies.

[AZAZIEL and SAMIASA fly off, and disappear with  
 ANAH and AHOLIBAMAH.

*Japh.* They are gone ! They have disappeared amidst  
 the roar

Of the forsaken world ; and never more,  
 Whether they live, or die with all Earth's life,  
 Now near its last, can aught restore  
 Anah unto these eyes.

*Chorus of Mortals.*

Oh son of Noah ! mercy on thy kind !  
 What ! wilt thou leave us all—all—*all* behind ?  
 While safe amidst the elemental strife, 830  
 Thou sitt'st within thy guarded ark ?

*A Mother (offering her infant to JAPHET).* Oh, let this  
 child embark !

I brought him forth in woe,  
 But thought it joy  
 To see him to my bosom clinging so.  
 Why was he born ?  
 What hath he done—  
 My unweaned son—

To move Jehovah's wrath or scorn ?  
 What is there in this milk of mine, that Death 840  
 Should stir all Heaven and Earth up to destroy  
 My boy,

And roll the waters o'er his placid breath ?  
 Save him, thou seed of Seth !  
 Or curséd be—with him who made  
 Thee and thy race, for which we are betrayed !

*Japh.* Peace ! 'tis no hour for curses, but for prayer !

*Chorus of Mortals.*

For prayer !!!  
 And where

Shall prayer ascend,  
When the swoln clouds unto the mountains bend  
And burst,  
And gushing oceans every barrier rend,  
Until the very deserts know no thirst?  
Accursed  
Be he who made thee and thy sire!  
We deem our curses vain; we must expire;  
But as we know the worst,  
Why should our hymns be raised, our knees be bent  
Before the implacable Omnipotent, 850  
Since we must fall the same?  
If he hath made Earth, let it be his shame,  
To make a world for torture.—Lo! they come,  
The loathsome waters, in their rage!  
And with their roar make wholesome nature dumb!  
The forest's trees (coeval with the hour  
When Paradise upsprung,  
Ere Eve gave Adam knowledge for her dower,  
Or Adam his first hymn of slavery sung),  
So massy, vast, yet green in their old age, 870  
Are overtopped,  
Their summer blossoms by the surges lopped,  
Which rise, and rise, and rise.  
Vainly we look up to the lowering skies—  
They meet the seas,  
And shut out God from our beseeching eyes.  
Fly, son of Noah, fly! and take thine ease,  
In thine allotted ocean-tent;  
And view, all floating o'er the element,  
The corpses of the world of thy young days: 880  
Then to Jehovah raise  
Thy song of praise!  
*A Mortal.* Blesséd are the dead  
Who die in the Lord!  
And though the waters be o'er earth outspread,  
Yet, as *his* word,  
Be the decree adored!  
He gave me life—he taketh but  
The-breath which is his own:  
And though these eyes should be for ever shut, 89

Nor longer this weak voice before his throne  
 Be heard in supplicating tone,  
     Still blesséd be the Lord,  
         For what is past,  
         For that which is :  
         For all are his,  
         From first to last—  
 Time—Space—Eternity—Life—Death—  
 The vast known and immeasurable unknown.  
 He made, and can unmake ;  
     And shall I, for a little gasp of breath,  
 Blaspheme and groan ?  
     No ; let me die, as I have lived, in faith,  
 Nor quiver, though the Universe may quake !

900

*Chorus of Mortals.*

Where shall we fly ?  
 Not to the mountains high ;  
 For now their torrents rush, with double roar  
 To meet the Ocean, which, advancing still  
 Already grasps each drowning hill,  
 Nor leaves an unsearched cave.

910

*Enter a Woman.*

*Woman.* Oh, save me, save !  
 Our valley is no more :  
 My father and my father's tent,  
 My brethren and my brethren's herds,  
 The pleasant trees that o'er our noonday bent,  
 And sent forth evening songs from sweetest birds,  
 The little rivulet which freshened all  
     Our pastures green,  
     No more are to be seen.  
 When to the mountain cliff I climbed this morn,  
     I turned to bless the spot,  
     And not a leaf appeared about to fall ;—  
     And now they are not !—  
 Why was I born ?  
*Japh.* To die ! in youth to die !  
 And happier in that doom,

920

Than to behold the universal tomb,  
Which I

Am thus condemned to weep above in vain.

Why, when all perish, why must I remain?

[*The waters rise; Men fly in every direction; many are overtaken by the waves: the Chorus of Mortals disperses in search of safety up the mountains: JAPHET remains upon a rock, while the Ark floats towards him in the distance.*<sup>1</sup>

1. [Sketch of Second Part of *Heaven and Earth*, as reported by Medwin (*Conversations*, 1824, pp. 234-237)—

"Azazael and Samiasa . . . rise into the air with the two sisters. . . . The appearance of the land strangled by the ocean will serve by way of scenery and decorations. The affectionate tenderness of Adah for those from whom she is parted, and for ever, and her fears contrasting with the loftier spirit of Aholibamah triumphing in the hopes of a new and greater destiny will make the dialogue. They, in the meantime, continue their aerial voyage, everywhere denied admittance in those floating islands over the sea of space, and driven back by guardian-spirits of the different planets, till they are at length forced to alight on the only peak of the earth uncovered by water. Here a parting takes place between the lovers. . . . The fallen angels are suddenly called, and condemned, their destination and punishment unknown. The sisters cling to the rock, the waters mounting higher and higher. Now enter Ark. The scene draws up, and discovers Japhet endeavouring to persuade the Patriarch, with very strong arguments of love and pity, to receive the sisters, or at least Adah, on board. Adah joins in his entreaties, and endeavours to cling to the sides of the vessel. The proud and haughty Aholibamah scorns to pray either to God or man, and anticipates the grave by plunging into the waters. Noah is still inexorable. [Adah] is momentarily in danger of perishing before the eyes of the Arkites. Japhet is in despair. The last wave sweeps her from the rock, and her lifeless corpse floats past in all its beauty, whilst a sea-bird screams over it, and seems to be the spirit of her angel lord. I once thought of conveying the lovers to the moon or one of the planets; but it is not easy for the imagination to make any unknown world more beautiful than this; besides, I did not think they would approve of the moon as a residence. I remember what Fontenelle said of its having no atmosphere, and the dark spots having caverns where the inhabitants reside. There was another objection: all the human interest would have been destroyed, which I have even endeavoured to give my angels."]



T

WERNER;  
OR,  
THE INHERITANCE:  
A TRAGEDY.

T

[*Werner* was produced, for the first time, at the Park Theatre, New York, in 1826. Mr. Barry played "Werner."

*Werner* was brought out at Drury Lane Theatre, and played, for the first time, December 15, 1830. Macready appeared as "Werner," J. W. Wallack as "Ulric," Mrs. Faucit as "Josephine," and Miss Mordaunt as "Ida." According to the *Times*, December 16, 1830, "Mr. Macready appeared to very great advantage. We have never seen him exert himself more—we have never known him to exert himself with more powerful effect. Three of his scenes were masterpieces." Genest says that *Werner* was acted seventeen times in 1830-31.

There was a revival in 1833. Macready says (*Diary*, March 20) that he acted "'Werner' with unusual force, truth, and collectedness . . . finished off each burst of passion, and, in consequence, entered on the following emotion with clearness and earnestness" (Macready's *Reminiscences*, 1875, i. 366).

*Werner* was played in 1834, 5, 6, 7, 9; in 1841; in 1843-4 (New York, Boston, Baltimore, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Montreal); in 1845 (Paris, London, Glasgow, Belfast, Dublin); in 1846, 1847; in America in 1848; in the provinces in 1849; in 1850; and, for the last time, at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, January 14, 1851. At the farewell performance Macready appeared as "Werner," Mr. Davenport as "Ulric," Mrs. Warner as "Josephine," Mrs. Ryder as "Ida." In the same year (1851) a portrait of Macready as "Werner," by Daniel Maclise, R.A., was on view at the Exhibition at the Royal Academy. The motto was taken from *Werner*, act i. sc. 1, lines 114, *sq.* (See, for a detailed criticism of Macready's "Werner," *Our Recent Actors*, by Westland Marston, 1881, i. 89-98; and for the famous "Macready burst," in act ii. sc. 2, and act v. sc. 1, *vide ibid.*, i. 97.)

*Werner* was brought out at Sadler's Wells Theatre, November 21, 1860, and repeated November 22, 23, 24, 28, 29; December, 3, 4, 11, 13, 14, 1860. Phelps appeared as "Werner," Mr. Edmund Phelps as "Ulric," Miss Atkinson as "Josephine." "Perhaps the old actor never performed the part so finely as he did on that night. The identity between the real and ideal relations of the characters was as vivid to him as to the audience, and gave a deeper intensity, on both sides, to the scenes between father and son." (See *The London Stage*, by H. Barton Baker, 1889, ii. 217.)

On the afternoon of June 1, 1887, *Werner* (four acts, arranged by Frank Marshall) was performed at the Lyceum Theatre for the benefit of Westland Marston. [Sir] Henry Irving appeared as "Werner," Miss Ellen Terry as "Josephine," Mr. Alexander as "Ulric." (See for an appreciation of Sir Henry Irving's presentation of *Werner*, the *Athenæum*, June 4, 1887.)]

## INTRODUCTION TO *WERNER*.

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*WERNER*; or, *The Inheritance*, was begun at Pisa, December 18, 1821, and finished January 20, 1822. At the end of the month, January 29, Byron despatched the MS., not to Murray, but to Moore, then in retreat at Paris, intending, no doubt, that it should be placed in the hands of another publisher; but a letter from Murray "melted him," and on March 6, 1822 (*Letters*, 1901, vi. 34), he desired Moore to forward the packet to Albemarle Street. The play was set up in type, and revised proofs were returned to Murray at the end of June; but, for various reasons, publication was withheld, and, on October 31, Byron informed John Hunt that he had empowered his friend Douglas Kinnaird to obtain *Werner*, with other MSS., from Murray. None the less, milder counsels again prevailed, and on Saturday, November 23, 1822, *Werner* was published, not in the same volume with *Heaven and Earth*, as Byron intended and expected, nor by John Hunt, as he had threatened, but by itself, and, as heretofore, by John Murray. *Werner* was "the last of all the flock" to issue from Murray's fold.

In his Preface to *Werner* (*vide post*, p. 337) Byron disclaims all pretensions to originality. "The following drama," he writes, "is taken entirely from the 'German's Tale, Kruitznor,' published . . . in Lee's *Canterbury Tales*. . . . I have adopted the characters, plan, and even the language, of many parts of this story." *Kruitznor* seems to have made a deep impression on his mind. When he was a boy of thirteen (*i.e.* in 1801, when the fourth volume of the *Canterbury Tales* was published), and again in 1815, he set himself to turn the tale into a drama. His first attempt, named *Ulric and Ilvina*, he threw into the fire, but he had nearly completed the first act of his second and maturer adaptation when he was "interrupted by circumstances," that is, no doubt, the circumstances which led up to and ended in



the separation from his wife. (See letter of October 9, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 391.)

On his leaving England for the Continent, April 25, 1816, the fragment was left behind. Most probably the MS. fell into his sister's hands, for in October, 1821, it was not forthcoming when Byron gave directions that Hobhouse should search for it "amongst my papers." Ultimately it came into the possession of the late Mr. Murray, and is now printed for the first time in its entirety (*vide post*, pp. 453-466: selections were given in the *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1899). It should be borne in mind that this unprinted first act of *Werner*, which synchronizes with the *Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina*, was written when Byron was a member of the sub-committee of management of Drury Lane Theatre, and, as the numerous stage directions testify, with a view to stage-representation. The MS. is scored with corrections, and betrays an unusual elaboration, and, perhaps, some difficulty and hesitation in the choice of words and the construction of sentences. In the opening scene the situation is not caught and gripped, while the melancholy squalor of the original narrative is only too faithfully reproduced. The *Werner* of 1821, with all its shortcomings, is the production of a playwright. The *Werner* of 1815 is the attempt of a highly gifted amateur.

When Byron once more bethought himself of his old subject, he not only sent for the MS. of the first act, but desired Murray "to cut out Sophia Lee's" (*vide post*, p. 337) "*German's Tale* from the *Canterbury Tales*, and send it in a letter" (*Letters*, 1901, v. 390). He seems to have intended from the first to construct a drama out of the story, and, no doubt, to acknowledge the source of his inspiration. On the whole, he carried out his intention, taking places, characters, and incidents as he found them, but recasting the materials and turning prose into metre. But here and there, to save himself trouble, he "stole his brooms ready made," and, as he acknowledges in the Preface, "adopted even the language of the story." Act ii. sc. 2, lines 87-172; act iii. sc. 4; and act v. sc. 1, lines 94-479, are, more or less, faithful and exact reproductions of pp. 203-206, 228-232, and 252-271 of the novel (see *Canterbury Tales*, ed. 1832, vol. ii.). On the other hand, in the remaining three-fourths of the play, the language is not Miss Lee's, but Byron's, and the "conveyance" of incidents occasional and insignificant. Much, too, was imported into the play (*e.g.* almost the whole of the fourth act), of which there is neither hint nor suggestion in the story. Maginn's categorical statement (see "O'Doherty on *Werner*," *Miscellanies*, 1885, i. 189) that "here Lord Byron has *invented*

nothing—absolutely, positively, undeniably NOTHING ;” that “there is not one incident in his play, not even the most trivial, that is not to be found in the novel,” etc., is “positively and undeniably” a falsehood. Maginn read *Werner* for the purpose of attacking Byron, and, by printing selected passages from the novel and the play, in parallel columns, gives the reader to understand that he had made an exhaustive analysis of the original and the copy. The review, which is quoted as an authority in the editions of 1832 (xiv. pp. 113, 114) and 1837, etc., p. 341, is disingenuous and misleading.

The original story may be briefly retold. The prodigal and outlawed son of a Bohemian noble, Count Siegendorf, after various adventures, marries, under the assumed name of Friedrich Kruitznor, the daughter of an Italian scholar and man of science, of noble birth, but in narrow circumstances. A son, Conrad, is born to him, who, at eight years of age, is transferred to the charge of his grandfather. Twelve years go by, and, when the fortunes of the younger Siegendorf are at their lowest ebb, he learns, at the same moment, that his father is dead, and that a distant kinsman, the Baron Stralenheim, is meditating an attack on his person, with a view to claiming his inheritance. Of Conrad, who has disappeared, he hears nothing.

An accident compels the count and the baron to occupy adjoining quarters in a small town on the northern frontier of Silesia ; and, again, another accident places the usurping and intriguing baron at the mercy of his poverty-stricken and exiled kinsman. Stralenheim has fallen asleep near the fire in his easy-chair. Papers and several rouleaux of gold are ranged on a cabinet beside the bed. Kruitznor, who is armed with “a large and sharp knife,” is suddenly confronted with his unarmed and slumbering foe, and though habit and conscience conspire to make murder impossible, he yields to a sudden and irresistible impulse, and snatches up “the portion of gold which is nearest.” He has no sooner returned to his wife and confessed his deed, than Conrad suddenly appears on the scene, and at the very moment of an unexpected and joyous reunion with his parents, learns that his father is a thief. Kruitznor pleads “guilty with extenuating circumstances,” and Conrad, who either is or pretends to be disgusted at his father’s sophistries, makes the best of a bad business, and undertakes to conceal his father’s dishonour and rescue him from the power of Stralenheim. The plot hinges on the unlooked-for and unsuspected action of Conrad. Unlike his father, he is not the man to let “I dare not wait upon I would,” but murders Stralenheim in cold blood, and, at the same time, diverts suspicion from his father and

himself to the person of his comrade, a Hungarian soldier of fortune, who is already supposed to be the thief, and who had sought and obtained shelter in the apartments of the conscience-stricken Kruitznér.

The scene changes to Prague. Siegendorf, no longer Kruitznér, has regained his inheritance, and is once more at the height of splendour and prosperity. A service of thanksgiving is being held in the cathedral to commemorate the signature of the Treaty of Prague (1635), and the count is present in state. Suddenly he catches sight of the Hungarian, and, "like a flash of lightning," feels and remembers that he *is* a thief, and that he might, however unjustly, be suspected if not accused of the murder of Stralenheim. The service is over, and the count is recrossing "Muldau's Bridge," when he hears the fatal word *Kruitznér*, "the seal of his shame," spoken in his ear. He returns to his castle, and issues orders that the Hungarian should be arrested and interrogated. An interview takes place, at which the Hungarian denounces Conrad as the murderer of Stralenheim. The son acknowledges the deed, and upbraids the father for his weakness and credulity in supposing that his escape from Stralenheim's machinations could have been effected by any other means. If, he argues, circumstances can palliate dishonesty, they can compel and justify murder. Common sense even now demands the immediate slaughter of the Hungarian, as it compelled and sanctioned the effectual silencing of Stralenheim. But Siegendorf knows not "thorough," and shrinks at assassination. He repudiates and denounces his son, and connives at the escape of the Hungarian. Conrad, who is banished from Prague, rejoins his former associates, the "black bands," which were the scandal and terror of the neighbouring provinces, and is killed in a skirmish with the regular troops. Siegendorf dies of a broken heart.

The conception of *The German's Tale*, as Byron perceived, is superior to the execution. The style is laboured and involved, and the narrative long-winded and tiresome. It is, perhaps, an adaptation, though not a literal translation, of a German historical romance. But the *motif*—a son predestined to evil by the weakness and sensuality of his father, a father punished for his want of rectitude by the passionate criminality of his son, is the very key-note of tragedy.

If from haste or indolence Byron scamped his task, and cut up whole cantles of the novel into nerveless and pointless blank verse, here and there throughout the play, in scattered lines and passages, he outdoes himself. The inspiration is fitful, but supreme.

*Werner* was reviewed in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, December, 1822, vol. xii. pp. 710-719 (republished in *Miscellanies* of W. Maginn, 1885, i. 189); in the *Scots Magazine*, December, 1822, N.S. vol. xi. pp. 688-694; the *European Magazine*, January, 1823, vol. 83, pp. 73-76; and in the *Eclectic Review*, February, 1823, N.S. vol. xix. pp. 148-155.

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NOTE TO THE INTRODUCTION TO *WERNER*.

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IN an article entitled, "Did Byron write *Werner*?" which appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* (August, 1899, vol. 46, pp. 243-250), the Hon. F. Leveson Gower undertakes to prove that *Werner* was not written by Lord Byron, but by Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire (born June 9, 1757, died March 30, 1806). He adduces, in support of this claim, (1) a statement made to him by his sister, the late Lady Georgiana Fullerton, to the effect that their grandmother, the duchess, "wrote the poem and gave the MS. to her niece, Lady Caroline Ponsonby (better known as Lady Caroline Lamb), and that she, some years later, handed it over to Lord Byron, who, in 1822, published it in his own name;" (2) a letter written in 1822 by his mother, Lady Granville, to her sister, Lady Carlisle, which asserts that their mother, the duchess, "wrote an entire tragedy from Miss Lee's *Kreutzner the Hungarian* (*sic*)," and that the MS. had been sent to her by Lady Caroline's brother, Mr. William Ponsonby, and was in her possession; (3) another letter of Lady Granville's, dated December 3, 1822, in which she informs her sister that her husband, Lord Granville, had promised to read *Werner* aloud to her (*i.e.* Byron's *Werner*, published November 23, 1822), a promise which, if fulfilled, must have revealed one of two things—the existence of two dramas based on Miss Lee's *Kreutzner*, or the identity of Byron's version with that of the duchess. Now, argues Mr. Leveson Gower, if Lady Granville had known that two dramas were in existence, she would not have allowed her daughter, Lady Georgiana Fullerton, to believe "that the duchess was the author of the published poem."

I will deal with the external evidence first. Practically it amounts to this: (1) that Lady Granville knew that her

mother, the Duchess of Devonshire, dramatized Miss Lee's *Kruitazer*; and (2) that Lady Georgiana Fullerton believed that the duchess gave the MS. of her play to Lady Caroline Ponsonby, and that, many years after, Lady Caroline handed it over to Byron.

The external evidence establishes the fact that the Duchess of Devonshire dramatized *Kruitazer*, but it does not prove that Byron purloined her adaptation. It records an unverified impression on the part of the duchess's granddaughter, that the MS. of a play written between the years 1801-1806, passed into Byron's hands about the year 1813; that he took a copy of the MS.; and that in 1821-22 he caused his copy to be retranscribed and published under his own name.

But Mr. Leveson Gower appeals to internal as well as external evidence. (1) He regards the great inferiority of *Werner* to Byron's published plays, and to the genuine (hitherto) unpublished first act, together with the wholesale plagiarisms from Miss Lee's story, as an additional proof that the work was none of his. (2) He notes, as a suspicious circumstance, that "while the rough copies of his other poems have been preserved, no rough copy of *Werner* is to be found."

In conclusion, he deals with two possible objections which may be brought against his theory: (1) that Byron would not have incurred the risk of detection at the hands of the owners of the duchess's MS.; and (2) that a great poet of assured fame and reputation could have had no possible motive for perpetrating a literary fraud. The first objection he answers by assuming that Byron would have counted on the reluctance of the "Ponsonby family and the daughters of the Duchess" to rake up the ashes of old scandals; the second, by pointing out that, in 1822, he was making "frantic endeavours to obtain money, not for himself, but to help the cause of Greece."

(1) With regard to the marked inferiority of *Werner* to Byron's other plays, and the relative proportion of adapted to original matter, Mr. Leveson Gower appears to have been misled by the disingenuous criticism of Maginn and other contemporary reviewers (*vide* the Introduction, etc., p. 326). There is no such inferiority, and the plagiarisms, which were duly acknowledged, are confined to certain limited portions of the play. (2) There is nothing unusual in the fact that the rough draft of *Werner* cannot be found. In fact, but few of the early drafts of the dramas and other poems written in the later Italian days ever reached Murray's hands, or are still in existence. The fair copy for the printer alone was sent home. The time had gone by when Byron's publisher, who was also his friend, would stipulate that "all the original







W. H. W. H. W. H.

*Georgiana, 5<sup>th</sup> Duchess of Devonshire.*

*From the original portrait by Sir J. Reynolds.*





MSS., copies and scraps" should fall to his share. But no argument can be founded on so insignificant a circumstance.

Finally, the argument on which Mr. Leveson Gower dwells at some length, that Byron's "motive" for perpetrating a literary fraud was the necessity for raising money for the cause of Greek independence, is refuted by the fact that *Werner* was begun in December, 1821, and finished in January, 1822, and that it was not till the spring of 1823 that he was elected a member of the Greek Committee, or had any occasion to raise funds for the maintenance of troops or the general expenses of the war. So far from attempting to raise money by *Werner*, in letters to Murray, dated March 6, October 24, November 18, 1822, he emphatically waives the question of "terms," and makes no demand or request for money whatever. It was not till December 23, 1823 (*Letters*, 1901, vi. 287), two years after the play had been written, that he speaks of applying the two or three hundred pounds which the copyright of *Werner* might be worth, to the maintenance of armed men in the service of the *Provisional Government*. He could not have "purloined" and palmed off as his own the duchess's version of Miss Lee's story in order to raise money for a purpose which had not arisen. He had no intention at first or last of presenting the copyright of *Werner* to Murray or Hunt, but he was willing to wait for his money, and had no motive for raising funds by an illegal and dishonourable trick.

That Byron did *not* write *Werner* is, surely, non-proven on the external and internal evidence adduced by Mr. Leveson Gower. On the other hand, there is abundant evidence, both external and internal, that, apart from his acknowledged indebtedness to Miss Lee's story, he did write *Werner*.

To take the external evidence first. On the first page of Mrs. Shelley's transcript of *Werner*, Byron inserted the date, "Dec. 18, 1821," and on the last he wrote "[The End] of fifth act of the Drama. B. P[isa]. Jy 21. 1822."

Turning to the journal of Edward Williams (Shelley's *Prose Works*, 1880, iv. 318), I find the following entries:—

"December 21, 1821. Lord B. told me that he had commenced a tragedy from Miss Lee's *German Tale* ('*Werner*'), and had been fagging at it all day."

"January 8, 1822. Mary read us the first two acts of Lord B.'s *Werner*."

Again, in an unpublished diary of the same period it is recorded that Mrs. Shelley was engaged in the task of copying on January 17, 1822, and the eight following days, and that on January 25 she finished her transcript.

Again, Medwin (*Conversations*, 1824, p. 409) records the fact

that Byron told him "that he had almost finished another play . . . called *Werner* ;" and (p. 412) "that *Werner* was written in twenty-eight days, and one entire act at a sitting." It is almost incredible that Byron should have recopied a copy of the duchess's play in order to impose on Mrs. Shelley and Williams and Medwin ; and it is quite incredible that they were in the plot, and lent themselves to the deception. It is certain that both Williams and Medwin believed that Byron was the author of *Werner*, and it is certain that nothing would have induced Mrs. Shelley to be *particeps criminis*—to copy a play which was not Byron's, to be published as Byron's, and to suffer her copy to be fraudulently endorsed by her guilty accomplice.

The internal evidence of the genuineness of *Werner* is still more convincing. In the first place, there are numerous "undesigned coincidences," allusions, and phrases to be found in *Werner* and elsewhere in Byron's *Poetical Works*, which bear his sign-manual, and cannot be attributed to another writer ; and, secondly, scattered through the play there are numerous lines, passages, allusions—"a cloud of witnesses" to their Byronic inspiration and creation.

Take the following parallels :—

*Werner*, act i. sc. 1, lines 693, 694—

" . . . as parchment on a drum,  
Like Ziska's skin."

*Age of Bronze*, lines 133, 134—

"The time may come,  
His name shall beat the alarm like Ziska's drum."

*Werner*, act ii. sc. 2, lines 177, 178—

" . . . save your throat  
From the Raven-stone."

*Manfred*, act iii. (original version)—

"The raven sits  
On the Raven-stone."

*Werner*, act ii. sc. 2, line 279—

"Things which had made this silkworm cast his skin."

*Marino Faliero*, act ii. sc. 2, line 115—

" . . . these swoln silkworms masters."

("Silkworm," as a term of contempt, is an Italianism.)

*Werner*, act iii. sc. 1, lines 288, 289—

"I fear that men must draw their chariots, as  
They say kings did Sesostris'."

*Age of Bronze*, line 45—

"The new Sesostris, whose unharnessed kings."

*Werner*, act iii. sc. 3, lines 10, 11—

" . . . while the knoll  
Of long-lived parents."

*Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza xcvi. lines 5, 6—

" . . . is the knoll  
Of what in me is sleepless."

(Wordsworth, in the *Excursion*, uses the archaic "knoll" as a substantive, but the repetition of so rare a word is significant.)

Or, compare the statement (see act i. sc. 1, line 213, *sq.*) that "A great personage . . . is drowned below the ford, with five post-horses, A monkey and a mastiff—and a valet," with the corresponding passage in *Krutzner* and in Byron's unfinished fragment; and note that "the monkey, the mastiff, and the valet," which formed part of Byron's retinue in 1821, are conspicuous by their absence from Miss Lee's story and the fragment.

Space precludes the quotation of further parallels, and for specimens of a score of passages which proclaim their author the following lines must suffice:—

Act i. sc. 1, lines 163-165—

" . . . although then  
My passions were all living serpents, and  
Twined like the Gorgon's round me."

Act iii. sc. 1, lines 264-268—

" . . . sound him with the gem;  
'Twill sink into his venal soul like lead  
Into the deep, and bring up slime and mud,  
And ooze, too, from the bottom, as the lead doth  
With its greased understratum."

*Did* Byron write *Werner*, or was it the Duchess of Devonshire?

(For a correspondence on the subject, see *Literature*, August 12, 19, 26, September 9, 1899.)



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TO  
THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE,  
BY ONE OF HIS HUMBLEST ADMIRERS,  
THIS TRAGEDY  
IS DEDICATED.

T



## PREFACE.

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THE following drama is taken entirely from the *German's Tale, Kruitzner*, published many years ago in "Lee's *Canterbury Tales*," written (I believe) by two sisters, of whom one furnished only this story and another, both of which are considered superior to the remainder of the collection.<sup>1</sup> I have adopted the characters, plan, and even the language of many parts of this story. Some of the characters are modified or altered, a few of the names changed, and one character (Ida of Stralenheim) added by myself: but in the rest

1. [This is not correct. *The Young Lady's Tale, or the Two Emilys* and *The Clergyman's Tale, or Pembroke*, were contributed by Sophia Lee. *Kruitzner, or The German's Tale*, was written by Harriet Lee (1757-1851), the younger of the sisters. Miss Lee began her literary career as a dramatist. A comedy, *The New Peerage; or, Our Eyes may deceive us*, was played at Drury Lane, November 10, 1787. In 1798 she published *The Mysterious Marriage; or, The Heirship of Rosalva*. After the publication of Byron's *Werner*, she wrote a dramatic version of *The German's Tale*, under the title of *The Three Strangers*. It was brought out at Covent Garden, December 10, 1825, and acted four times.

The first volume of the *Canterbury Tales*, by Harriet Lee, was published in 1797; the second volume, by Sophia Lee, in 1798 (a second edition of these volumes was published in 1799); a third volume (second edition), by Sophia and Harriet Lee, appeared in 1800; the fourth volume, by Harriet Lee (which contains *The German's Tale*, pp. 3-368), was published in 1801; and the fifth volume, by Harriet Lee, in 1805.

There can be little doubt that Byron's visit to Churchill's grave at Dover, which took place April 25, 1816 (see *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 45), was suggested by a passage in the *Introduction*, pp. vii.-ix., to the first volume (1797) of the *Canterbury Tales*. The author "wanders forth to note the *memorabilia* of Dover," is informed that "the greatest curiosity in the place is the tomb of a poet," and hastens "to a spot surrounded by ruined walls, in the midst of which stood the white marble tablet marked with Churchill's name," etc.]



the original is chiefly followed. When I was young (about fourteen, I think,) I first read this tale, which made a deep impression upon me; and may, indeed, be said to contain the germ of much that I have since written. I am not sure that it ever was very popular; or, at any rate, its popularity has since been eclipsed by that of other great writers in the same department. But I have generally found that those who *had* read it, agreed with me in their estimate of the singular power of mind and conception which it developes. I should also add *conception*, rather than execution; for the story might, perhaps, have been developed with greater advantage. Amongst those whose opinions agreed with mine upon this story, I could mention some very high names: but it is not necessary, nor indeed of any use; for every one must judge according to his own feelings. I merely refer the reader to the original story, that he may see to what extent I have borrowed from it; and am not unwilling that he should find much greater pleasure in perusing it than the drama which is founded upon its contents.

I had begun a drama upon this tale so far back as 1815, (the first I ever attempted, except one at thirteen years old, called "Ulric and Ilvina," which I had sense enough to burn,) and had nearly completed an act, when I was interrupted by circumstances. This is somewhere amongst my papers in England; but as it has not been found, I have re-written the first, and added the subsequent acts.

The whole is neither intended, nor in any shape adapted, for the stage.<sup>1</sup>

i. [*Of England or any other country. It may seem unnecessary to add this, but having seen a poem of mine never intended for representation, dragged in spite of my remonstrance upon the theatres of more than one nation, I trust it will not be deemed impertinent if I once more repeat my protest against [a gross] folly which may injure me—and [benefit] no one. If it be understood that all dramatic writing is generically intended for the stage, I deny it.*<sup>1</sup> *With the exception of Shakespeare*

i. [Byron is replying to Jeffrey (*Edinburgh Review*, February, 1822, vol. 35, p. 422). "A drama is not merely a dialogue, but an action: and necessarily supposes that something is to pass before the eyes of assembled spectators. . . . If an author does not bear this continually

(or Tate, Cibber, and Thompson under his name), not one in fifty plays of our dramatists is ever acted, however much they may be read. Only one of Massinger—none of Ford—none of Marlowe, one of Ben Jonson—none of Webster, none of Heywood: and, even in Comedy, Congreve is rarely acted, and that in only one of his plays. Neither is Joanna Baillie. I am far from attempting to raise myself to a level with the least of these names—I only wish to be [exempted] from a stage which is not theirs. Perhaps Mr. Lamb's essay upon the effects of dramatic representation on the intelligent auditor<sup>1</sup>—marks are just with regard to this—plays of Shakespeare himself—the hundredfold to those of others. —From a mutilated page of MS. M.]

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in his mind, and does not write in the ideal presence of an eager and diversified assemblage, he may be a poet, perhaps, but assuredly he will never be a dramatist."]

1. ["It may seem a paradox, but I cannot help being of opinion that the plays of Shakespeare are less calculated for performance on a stage than those of almost any other dramatist whatever."—"On the Tragedies of Shakespeare," *Complete Works of Charles Lamb*, 1875, p. 255. It was, too, something of a paradox that Byron should be eager to shelter himself under the ægis of Charles Lamb. But unpopularity, like poverty, brings together strange bedfellows.]

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



### MEN.

WERNER.  
ULRIC.  
STRALENHEIM.  
IDENSTEIN.  
GABOR.  
FRITZ.  
HENRICK.  
ERIC.  
ARNHEIM.  
MEISTER.  
RODOLPH.  
LUDWIG.

### WOMEN.

JOSEPHINE.  
IDA STRALENHEIM.

SCENE—Partly on the Frontier of Silesia, and partly in  
Siegendorf Castle, near Prague.

Time—*The Close of the Thirty Years' War.*<sup>1</sup>

1. [The Thirty Years' War dates from the capture of Pilsen by Mansfeld, November 21, 1618, and did not end till the Peace of Westphalia, October 24, 1648. The incident recorded in act v., a solemn commemoration of the Treaty of Prague, must have taken place in 1635. But in *Werner* there is little or no attempt "to follow history."]

# WERNER;

OR,

## THE INHERITANCE.

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### ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of a decayed Palace near a small Town on the Northern Frontier of Silesia—the Night tempestuous.*

WERNER and JOSEPHINE, *his Wife.*

*Jos.* My love, be calmer !

*Wer.*

I am calm.

*Jos.*

To me—

Yes, but not to thyself: thy pace is hurried,  
And no one walks a chamber like to ours,  
With steps like thine, when his heart is at rest.  
Were it a garden, I should deem thee happy,  
And stepping with the bee from flower to flower;  
But *here!*

*Wer.* 'Tis chill; the tapestry lets through  
The wind to which it waves: my blood is frozen.

*Jos.* Ah, no !

*Wer.* (*smiling*). Why ! wouldst thou have it so ?

*Jos.*

I would

Have it a healthful current.

*Wer.*

Let it flow

10

Until 'tis spilt or checked—how soon, I care not.

*Jos.* And am I nothing in thy heart ?

*Wer.*

All—all.

*Jos.* Then canst thou wish for that which must break mine?

*Wer.* (*approaching her slowly*). But for *thee* I had been—no matter what—

But much of good and evil ; what I am,  
Thou knowest ; what I might or should have been,  
Thou knowest not : but still I love thee, nor  
Shall aught divide us.

[*WERNER walks on abruptly, and then approaches*  
*JOSEPHINE.*

The storm of the night,  
Perhaps affects me ; I'm a thing of feelings,  
And have of late been sickly, as, alas ! 20  
Thou know'st by sufferings more than mine, my Love !  
In watching me.

*Jos.* To see thee well is much—  
To see thee happy——

*Wer.* Where hast thou seen such ?  
Let me be wretched with the rest !

*Jos.* But think  
How many in this hour of tempest shiver  
Beneath the biting wind and heavy rain,  
Whose every drop bows them down nearer earth,  
Which hath no chamber for them save beneath  
Her surface.

*Wer.* And that's not the worst : who cares  
For chambers ? rest is all. The wretches whom 30  
Thou namest—aye, the wind howls round them, and  
The dull and dropping rain saps in their bones  
The creeping marrow. I have been a soldier,  
A hunter, and a traveller, and am  
A beggar, and should know the thing thou talk'st of.

*Jos.* And art thou not now sheltered from them all ?

*Wer.* Yes. And from these alone.

*Jos.* And that is something.

*Wer.* True—to a peasant.<sup>1</sup>

*Jos.* Should the nobly born  
Be thankless for that refuge which their habits  
Of early delicacy render more 40

i. Yea—to a peasant.—[*MS. erased.*]

Needful than to the peasant, when the ebb  
Of fortune leaves them on the shoals of life ?

*Wer.* It is not that, thou know'st it is not : we  
Have borne all this, I'll not say patiently,  
Except in thee—but we have borne it.

*Jos.* Well ?

*Wer.* Something beyond our outward sufferings (though  
These were enough to gnaw into our souls)  
Hath stung me oft, and, more than ever, *now*.  
When, but for this untoward sickness, which  
Seized me upon this desolate frontier, and  
Hath wasted, not alone my strength, but means, 50  
And leaves us—no ! this is beyond me !—but  
For this I had been happy—*thou* been happy—  
The splendour of my rank sustained—my name—  
My father's name—been still upheld ; and, more  
Than those—

*Jos. (abruptly).* My son—our son—our Ulric,  
Been clasped again in these long-empty arms,  
And all a mother's hunger satisfied.  
Twelve years ! he was but eight then :—beautiful  
He was, and beautiful he must be now, 60  
My Ulric ! my adored !

*Wer.* I have been full oft  
The chase of Fortune ; now she hath o'ertaken  
My spirit where it cannot turn at bay,—  
Sick, poor, and lonely.

*Jos.* Lonely ! my dear husband ?

*Wer.* Or worse—involving all I love, in this  
Far worse than solitude. *Alone*, I had died,  
And all been over in a nameless grave.

*Jos.* And I had not outlived thee ; but pray take  
Comfort ! We have struggled long ; and they who  
strive

With Fortune win or weary her at last, 70  
So that they find the goal or cease to feel  
Further. Take comfort,—we shall find our boy.

*Wer.* We were in sight of him, of every thing  
Which could bring compensation for past sorrow—  
And to be baffled thus !

*Jos.* We are not baffled.

*Wer.* Are we not penniless ?

*Jos.* We ne'er were wealthy.

*Wer.* But I was born to wealth, and rank, and power ;  
Enjoyed them, loved them, and, alas ! abused them,  
And forfeited them by my father's wrath,  
In my o'er-fervent youth : but for the abuse 80  
Long-sufferings have atoned. My father's death  
Left the path open, yet not without snares.  
This cold and creeping kinsman, who so long  
Kept his eye on me, as the snake upon  
The fluttering bird, hath ere this time outstept me,  
Become the master of my rights, and lord  
Of that which lifts him up to princes in  
Dominion and domain.

*Jos.* Who knows ? our son  
May have returned back to his grandsire, and  
Even now uphold thy rights for thee ?

*Wer.* 'Tis hopeless. 90  
Since his strange disappearance from my father's,  
Entailing, as it were, my sins upon  
Himself, no tidings have revealed his course.  
I parted with him to his grandsire, on  
The promise that his anger would stop short  
Of the third generation ; but Heaven seems  
To claim her stern prerogative, and visit  
Upon my boy his father's faults and follies.

*Jos.* I must hope better still,—at least we have yet  
Baffled the long pursuit of Stralenheim. 100

*Wer.* We should have done, but for this fatal sickness ;—  
More fatal than a mortal malady,  
Because it takes not life, but life's sole solace :  
Even now I feel my spirit girt about  
By the snares of this avaricious fiend :—  
How do I know he hath not tracked us here ?

*Jos.* He does not know thy person ; and his spies,  
Who so long watched thee, have been left at Hamburgh.  
Our unexpected journey, and this change  
Of name, leaves all discovery far behind : 110  
None hold us here for aught save what we seem.

*Wer.* Save what we seem ! save what we *are*—sick  
beggars,

Even to our very hopes.—Ha ! ha !

*Jos.*

Alas !

That bitter laugh !

*Wer.*

*Who* would read in this form

The high soul of the son of a long line ?

*Who*, in this garb, the heir of princely lands ?

*Who*, in this sunken, sickly eye, the pride  
Of rank and ancestry ? In this worn cheek  
And famine-hollowed brow, the Lord of halls  
Which daily feast a thousand vassals ?

*Jos.*

You

120

Pondered not thus upon these worldly things,  
My Werner ! when you deigned to choose for bride  
The foreign daughter of a wandering exile.

*Wer.* An exile's daughter with an outcast son,  
Were a fit marriage : but I still had hopes  
To lift thee to the state we both were born for.  
Your father's house was noble, though decayed ;  
And worthy by its birth to match with ours.

*Jos.* Your father did not think so, though 'twas noble ;  
But had my birth been all my claim to match 130  
With thee, I should have deemed it what it is.

*Wer.* And what is that in thine eyes ?

*Jos.*

All which it

Has done in our behalf,—nothing.

*Wer.*

How,—nothing ?

*Jos.* Or worse ; for it has been a canker in  
Thy heart from the beginning : but for this,  
We had not felt our poverty but as  
Millions of myriads feel it—cheerfully ;  
But for these phantoms of thy feudal fathers,  
Thou mightst have earned thy bread, as thousands  
earn it ;

Or, if that seem too humble, tried by commerce, 140  
Or other civic means, to amend thy fortunes.

*Wer.* (*ironically*). And been an Hanseatic burgher ?  
Excellent !

*Jos.* Whate'er thou mightest have been, to me thou art  
What no state high or low can ever change,  
My heart's first choice ;—which chose thee, knowing  
neither



Thy birth, thy hopes, thy pride; nought, save thy sorrows:

While they last, let me comfort or divide them:

When they end—let mine end with them, or thee!

*Wer.* My better angel! Such I have ever found thee;  
This rashness, or this weakness of my temper, 150  
Ne'er raised a thought to injure thee or thine.

Thou didst not mar my fortunes: my own nature  
In youth was such as to unmake an empire,  
Had such been my inheritance; but now,  
Chastened, subdued, out-worn, and taught to know  
Myself,—to lose this for our son and thee!

Trust me, when, in my two-and-twentieth spring,  
My father barred me from my father's house,  
The last sole scion of a thousand sires  
(For I was then the last), it hurt me less 160  
Than to behold my boy and my boy's mother  
Excluded in their innocence from what  
My faults deserved—exclusion; although then  
My passions were all living serpents,<sup>1</sup> and  
Twined like the Gorgon's round me.

[*A loud knocking is heard.*]

*Jos.* Hark!

*Wer.* A knocking!

*Jos.* Who can it be at this lone hour? We have  
Few visitors.

*Wer.* And poverty hath none,  
Save those who come to make it poorer still.  
Well—I am prepared.

[*WERNER puts his hand into his bosom, as if to search for some weapon.*]

*Jos.* Oh! do not look so. I  
Will to the door. It cannot be of import 170  
In this lone spot of wintry desolation:—  
The very desert saves man from mankind.

[*She goes to the door.*]

1. [Compare—

“And still my passions wake and war.”

Lines “To —” [Lady Blessington],

*Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 564.]

*Enter IDENSTEIN.*

*Iden.* A fair good evening to my fair hostess  
And worthy——What's your name, my friend?

*Wer.* Are you  
Not afraid to demand it?

*Iden.* Not afraid?  
Egad! I am afraid. You look as if  
I asked for something better than your name,  
By the face you put on it.

*Wer.* Better, sir!

*Iden.* Better or worse, like matrimony: what  
Shall I say more? You have been a guest this month  
Here in the prince's palace——(to be sure, 181  
His Highness had resigned it to the ghosts  
And rats these twelve years—but 'tis still a palace)—  
I say you have been our lodger, and as yet  
We do not know your name.

*Wer.* My name is Werner.<sup>1</sup>

*Iden.* A goodly name, a very worthy name,  
As e'er was gilt upon a trader's board:  
I have a cousin in the lazaretto  
Of Hamburg, who has got a wife who bore  
The same. He is an officer of trust, 190  
Surgeon's assistant (hoping to be surgeon),  
And has done miracles i' the way of business.  
Perhaps you are related to my relative?

*Wer.* To yours?

*Jos.* Oh, yes; we are, but distantly.  
(*Aside to WERNER.*) Cannot you humour the dull gossip  
till

We learn his purpose?

*Iden.* Well, I'm glad of that;  
I thought so all along, such natural yearnings

1. [It has been surmised that Byron had some knowledge of the early life and history of the dramatist Friedrich Ludwig Zacharias Werner (1768-1823), and that a similarity of character and incident suggested the renaming of Kruitzner. But the change of name was made in 1815, not in 1821, and it is far more probable that Byron called his hero "Werner," because "Kruitzner" is unrhythmical, or simply because "Werner," a common German surname, is not unlike "Werther," which was "familiar as a household word."]

Played round my heart :—blood is not water, cousin ;  
 And so let's have some wine, and drink unto  
 Our better acquaintance : relatives should be                      200  
 Friends.

*Wer.* You appear to have drunk enough already ;  
 And if you have not, I've no wine to offer,  
 Else it were yours : but this you know, or should know :  
 You see I am poor, and sick, and will not see  
 That I would be alone ; but to your business !  
 What brings you here ?

*Iden.* Why, what should bring me here ?

*Wer.* I know not, though I think that I could guess  
 That which will send you hence.

*Jos. (aside).* Patience, dear Werner !

*Iden.* You don't know what has happened, then ?

*Jos.* How should we ?

*Iden.* The river has o'erflowed.

*Jos.* Alas ! we have known  
 That to our sorrow for these five days ; since                      211  
 It keeps us here.

*Iden.* But what you don't know is,  
 That a great personage, who fain would cross  
 Against the stream and three postilions' wishes,  
 Is drowned below the ford, with five post-horses,  
 A monkey, and a mastiff—and a valet.<sup>1</sup>

*Jos.* Poor creatures ! are you sure ?

*Iden.* Yes, of the monkey,  
 And the valet, and the cattle ; but as yet  
 We know not if his Excellency's dead  
 Or no ; your noblemen are hard to drown,                      220  
 As it is fit that men in office should be ;  
 But what is certain is, that he has swallowed  
 Enough of the Oder<sup>2</sup> to have burst two peasants ;  
 And now a Saxon and Hungarian traveller,  
 Who, at their proper peril, snatched him from

1. ["Lord Byron's establishment at Pisa was, like everything else about him, somewhat singular ; it consisted of a monkey, a mastiff, a bull-dog, two cats, . . . several servants in livery, and the trusty Fletcher as *Major Domo*, or superintendent of the *Menagerie*."]—*Life, Writings, Opinions, etc.*, 1825, ii. 203, 204. See, too, Medwin, *Conversations*, 1824, pp. 1, 2.]

2. [The Oder crosses and re-crosses the northern frontier of Silesia.]

The whirling river, have sent on to crave  
A lodging, or a grave, according as  
It may turn out with the live or dead body.

*Jos.* And where will you receive him? here, I hope,  
If we can be of service—say the word. 230

*Iden.* Here? no; but in the Prince's own apartment,  
As fits a noble guest:—'tis damp, no doubt,  
Not having been inhabited these twelve years;  
But then he comes from a much damper place,  
So scarcely will catch cold in't, if he be  
Still liable to cold—and if not, why  
He'll be worse lodged to-morrow: ne'ertheless,  
I have ordered fire and all appliances  
To be got ready for the worst—that is,  
In case he should survive.

*Jos.* Poor gentleman! 240  
I hope he will, with all my heart.

*Wer.* Intendant,  
Have you not learned his name? (*Aside to his wife.*)  
My Josephine,  
Retire: I'll sift this fool. [*Exit JOSEPHINE.*]

*Iden.* His name? oh Lord!  
Who knows if he hath now a name or no?  
'Tis time enough to ask it when he's able  
To give an answer; or if not, to put  
His heir's upon his epitaph. Methought  
Just now you chid me for demanding names?

*Wer.* True, true, I did so: you say well and wisely.

*Enter GABOR.*<sup>1</sup>

*Gab.* If I intrude, I crave——

*Iden.* Oh, no intrusion! 250  
This is the palace; this a stranger like  
Yourself; I pray you make yourself at home:  
But where's his Excellency? and how fares he?

*Gab.* Wetly and wearily, but out of peril:  
He paused to change his garments in a cottage

1. [In Miss Lee's *Kruitzen* Gabor is always spoken of as "The Hungarian." He is no doubt named after Bethlen Gabor, Prince of Transylvania, who was elected King of Hungary, August, 1620.]

(Where I doffed mine for these, and came on hither),  
And has almost recovered from his drenching.  
He will be here anon.

*Iden.* What ho, there ! bustle !  
Without there, Herman, Weilburg, Peter, Conrad !  
[*Gives directions to different servants who enter.*

A nobleman sleeps here to-night—see that 260  
All is in order in the damask chamber—  
Keep up the stove—I will myself to the cellar—  
And Madame Idenstein (my consort, stranger,)  
Shall furnish forth the bed-apparel ; for,  
To say the truth, they are marvellous scant of this  
Within the palace precincts, since his Highness  
Left it some dozen years ago. And then  
His Excellency will sup, doubtless?

*Gab.* Faith !  
I cannot tell ; but I should think the pillow  
Would please him better than the table, after 270  
His soaking in your river : but for fear  
Your viands should be thrown away, I mean  
To sup myself, and have a friend without  
Who will do honour to your good cheer with  
A traveller's appetite.

*Iden.* But are you sure  
His Excellency——But his name : what is it ?

*Gab.* I do not know.

*Iden.* And yet you saved his life.

*Gab.* I helped my friend to do so.

*Iden.* Well, that 's strange,  
To save a man's life whom you do not know.

*Gab.* Not so ; for there are some I know so well, 280  
I scarce should give myself the trouble.

*Iden.* Pray,  
Good friend, and who may you be ?

*Gab.* By my family,  
Hungarian.

*Iden.* Which is called ?

*Gab.* It matters little.

*Iden. (aside).* I think that all the world are grown  
anonymous,  
Since no one cares to tell me what he's called !

Pray, has his Excellency a large suite?

*Gab.*

Sufficient.

*Iden.* How many?

*Gab.*

I did not count them.

We came up by mere accident, and just

In time to drag him through his carriage window.

*Iden.* Well, what would I give to save a great man! 290  
No doubt you'll have a swingeing sum as recompense.

*Gab.* Perhaps.

*Iden.* Now, how much do you reckon on?

*Gab.* I have not yet put up myself to sale:

In the mean time, my best reward would be

A glass of your <sup>1</sup> Hockcheimer—a *green* glass,

Wreathed with rich grapes and Bacchanal devices,

O'erflowing with the oldest of your vintage:

For which I promise you, in case you e'er

Run hazard of being drowned, (although I own

It seems, of all deaths, the least likely for you,) 300

I'll pull you out for nothing. Quick, my friend,

And think, for every bumper I shall quaff,

A wave the less may roll above your head.

*Iden. (aside).* I don't much like this fellow—close and  
dry

He seems,—two things which suit me not; however,

Wine he shall have; if that unlocks him not,

I shall not sleep to-night for curiosity. [*Exit IDENSTEIN.*

*Gab. (to WERNER).* This master of the ceremonies is

The intendant of the palace, I presume:

Tis a fine building, but decayed.

*Wer.*

The apartment 310

Designed for him you rescued will be found

In fitter order for a sickly guest.

*Gab.* I wonder then you occupied it not,

For you seem delicate in health.

*Wer. (quickly).*

Sir!

*Gab.*

Pray

Excuse me: have I said aught to offend you?

*Wer.* Nothing: but we are strangers to each other.

1. [Compare—

“And so—for God's sake—hock and soda-water.”

Fragment written on MS. of Canto I. of *Don Juan.*]

*Gab.* And that 's the reason I would have us less so :  
I thought our bustling guest without had said  
You were a chance and passing guest, the counterpart  
Of me and my companions.

*Wer.* Very true. 320

*Gab.* Then, as we never met before, and never,  
It may be, may again encounter, why,  
I thought to cheer up this old dungeon here  
(At least to me) by asking you to share  
The fare of my companions and myself.

*Wer.* Pray, pardon me ; my health——

*Gab.* Even as you please.  
I have been a soldier, and perhaps am blunt  
In bearing.

*Wer.* I have also served, and can  
Requite a soldier's greeting.

*Gab.* In what service ?  
The Imperial ?

*Wer.* (*quickly, and then interrupting himself*). I com-  
manded—no—I mean 330  
I served ; but it is many years ago,  
When first Bohemia<sup>1</sup> raised her banner 'gainst  
The Austrian.

*Gab.* Well, that 's over now, and peace  
Has turned some thousand gallant hearts adrift  
To live as they best may : and, to say truth,  
Some take the shortest.

*Wer.* What is that ?

*Gab.* Whate'er  
They lay their hands on. All Silesia and  
Lusatia's woods are tenanted by bands  
Of the late troops, who levy on the country  
Their maintenance : the Chatelains must keep 340  
Their castle walls—beyond them 'tis but doubtful  
Travel for your rich Count or full-blown Baron.  
My comfort is that, wander where I may,

1. [On the 18th of August, 1619, Bethlen Gabor threw in his lot with the Bohemians, and "wrote the Directors at Prague that he would march with his troops, and in September would, in their defence, enter Moravia."—*History of the Thirty Years' War*, by A. Gindely, 1885, i. 166. *Vide ibid.*, for portrait of "Gabriel Bethlen, D. G. Princeps Transsylvaniæ, etc., Ætatis suæ 40, A° Christi, 1620."]

I've little left to lose now.

*Wer.* And I—nothing.

*Gab.* That's harder still. You say you were a soldier.

*Wer.* I was.

*Gab.* You look one still. All soldiers are  
Or should be comrades, even though enemies.  
Our swords when drawn must cross, our engines aim  
(While levelled) at each other's hearts; but when  
A truce, a peace, or what you will, remits 350  
The steel into its scabbard, and lets sleep  
The spark which lights the matchlock, we are brethren.  
You are poor and sickly—I am not rich, but healthy;  
I want for nothing which I cannot want;  
You seem devoid of this—wilt share it?

[*GABOR pulls out his purse.*  
Who

*Wer.*

Told you I was a beggar?

*Gab.* You yourself,

In saying you were a soldier during peace-time.

*Wer.* (*looking at him with suspicion*). You know me  
not.

*Gab.* I know no man, not even  
Myself: how should I then know one I ne'er  
Beheld till half an hour since?

*Wer.* Sir, I thank you. 360  
Your offer's noble were it to a friend,  
And not unkind as to an unknown stranger,  
Though scarcely prudent; but no less I thank you.  
I am a beggar in all save his trade;  
And when I beg of any one, it shall be  
Of him who was the first to offer what  
Few can obtain by asking. Pardon me. [*Exit WERNER.*

*Gab.* (*solus*). A goodly fellow by his looks, though  
worn  
As most good fellows are, by pain or pleasure,  
Which tear life out of us before our time; 370  
I scarce know which most quickly: but he seems  
To have seen better days, as who has not  
Who has seen yesterday?—But here approaches  
Our sage intendant, with the wine: however,  
For the cup's sake I'll bear the cupbearer.



*Enter IDENSTEIN.*

*Iden.* 'Tis here! the *supernaculum*! <sup>1</sup> twenty years  
Of age, if 'tis a day.

*Gab.* Which epoch makes  
Young women and old wine; and 'tis great pity,  
Of two such excellent things, increase of years,  
Which still improves the one, should spoil the other.  
Fill full—Here 's to our hostess!—your fair wife! 381  
[*Takes the glass.*]

*Iden.* Fair!—Well, I trust your taste in wine is equal  
To that you show for beauty; but I pledge you  
Nevertheless.

*Gab.* Is not the lovely woman  
I met in the adjacent hall, who, with  
An air, and port, and eye, which would have better  
Beseeemed this palace in its brightest days  
(Though in a garb adapted to its present  
Abandonment), returned my salutation—  
Is not the same your spouse?

*Iden.* I would she were! 390  
But you're mistaken:—that 's the stranger's wife.

*Gab.* And by her aspect she might be a Prince's;  
Though time hath touched her too, she still retains  
Much beauty, and more majesty.

*Iden.* And that  
Is more than I can say for Madame Idenstein,  
At least in beauty: as for majesty,  
She has some of its properties which might  
Be spared—but never mind!

*Gab.* I don't. But who  
May be this stranger? He too hath a bearing  
Above his outward fortunes.

*Iden.* There I differ. 400  
He's poor as Job, and not so patient; but  
Who he may be, or what, or aught of him,

1. [From *super*, and *nagel*, "a nail." To drink *supernaculum* is to empty the cup so thoroughly that the last drop or "pearl," drained on to the nail, retains its shape, and does not run. If "the pearl" broke and began to slide, the drinker was "sconced." Hence, good liquor. See Rabelais' *Life of Gargantua, etc.*, Urquhart's Translation, 1863, lib. 1, ch. 5.]

Except his name (and that I only learned  
To-night), I know not.

*Gab.* But how came he here?

*Iden.* In a most miserable old caleche,  
About a month since, and immediately  
Fell sick, almost to death. He should have died.

*Gab.* Tender and true!—but why?

*Iden.* Why, what is life  
Without a living? He has not a stiver.<sup>i</sup>

*Gab.* In that case, I much wonder that a person 410  
Of your apparent prudence should admit  
Guests so forlorn into this noble mansion.

*Iden.* That's true: but pity, as you know, *does* make  
One's heart commit these follies; and besides,  
They had some valuables left at that time,  
Which paid their way up to the present hour;  
And so I thought they might as well be lodged  
Here as at the small tavern, and I gave them  
The run of some of the oldest palace rooms.  
They served to air them, at the least as long 420  
As they could pay for firewood.

*Gab.* Poor souls!

*Iden.* Aye,  
Exceeding poor.

*Gab.* And yet unused to poverty,  
If I mistake not. Whither were they going?

*Iden.* Oh! Heaven knows where, unless to Heaven  
itself.

Some days ago that looked the likeliest journey  
For Werner.

*Gab.* Werner! I have heard the name.  
But it may be a feigned one.

*Iden.* Like enough!  
But hark! a noise of wheels and voices, and  
A blaze of torches from without. As sure  
As destiny, his Excellency's come. 430  
I must be at my post; will you not join me,  
To help him from his carriage, and present  
Your humble duty at the door?

*Gab.* I dragged him

i. Without means and he has not a stiver left.—[MS. erased.]

From out that carriage when he would have given  
 His barony or county to repel  
 The rushing river from his gurgling throat.  
 He has valets now enough : they stood aloof then,  
 Shaking their dripping ears upon the shore,  
 All roaring "Help !" but offering none ; and as  
 For *duty* (as you call it)—I did mine *then*, 440  
 Now do *yours*. Hence, and bow and cringe him here !  
*Iden.* I cringe !—but I shall lose the opportunity—  
 Plague take it ! he'll be *here*, and I *not there* !  
 [Exit IDENSTEIN *hastily*.

*Re-enter WERNER.*

*Wer. (to himself).* I heard a noise of wheels and  
 voices. How  
 All sounds now jar me ! [Perceiving GABOR.  
 Still here ! Is he not  
 A spy of my pursuer's ? His frank offer  
 So suddenly, and to a stranger, wore  
 The aspect of a secret enemy ;  
 For friends are slow at such.

*Gab.* Sir, you seem rapt ;  
 And yet the time is not akin to thought. 450  
 These old walls will be noisy soon. The baron,  
 Or count (or whatsoever this half drowned noble  
 May be), for whom this desolate village and  
 Its lone inhabitants show more respect  
 Than did the elements, is come.

*Iden. (without).* This way—  
 This way, your Excellency :—have a care,  
 The staircase is a little gloomy, and  
 Somewhat decayed ; but if we had expected  
 So high a guest—Pray take my arm, my Lord !

*Enter STRALENHEIM, IDENSTEIN, and Attendants—partly  
 his own, and partly Retainers of the Domain of which  
 IDENSTEIN is Intendant.*

*Stral.* I'll rest here a moment.

*Iden. (to the servants).* Ho ! a chair ! 460  
 Instantly, knaves. [STRALENHEIM *sits down*.

*Wer.* (*aside*). 'Tis he!

*Stral.* I'm better now.

Who are these strangers?

*Iden.* Please you, my good Lord,

One says he is no stranger.

*Wer.* (*aloud and hastily*). Who says that?

[*They look at him with surprise.*]

*Iden.* Why, no one spoke of you, or to you!—but

Here 's one his Excellency may be pleased

To recognise. [*Pointing to GABOR.*]

*Gab.* I seek not to disturb

His noble memory.

*Stral.* I apprehend

This is one of the strangers to whose aid<sup>1</sup>

I owe my rescue. Is not that the other?

[*Pointing to WERNER.*]

My state when I was succoured must excuse 470

My uncertainty to whom I owe so much.

*Iden.* He!—no, my Lord! he rather wants for rescue

Than can afford it. 'Tis a poor sick man,

Travel-tired, and lately risen from a bed

From whence he never dreamed to rise.

*Stral.* Methought

That there were two.

*Gab.* There were, in company;

But, in the service rendered to your Lordship,

I needs must say but *one*, and he is absent.

The chief part of whatever aid was rendered

Was *his*: it was his fortune to be first. 480

My will was not inferior, but his strength

And youth outstripped me; therefore do not waste

Your thanks on me. I was but a glad second

Unto a nobler principal.

*Stral.* Where is he?

*An Atten.* My Lord, he tarried in the cottage where

Your Excellency rested for an hour,

And said he would be here to-morrow.

*Stral.* Till

That hour arrives, I can but offer thanks,

And then——

i. *This is one of those to whom I owe aid.*—[*MS. erased.*]

*Gab.* I seek no more, and scarce deserve  
So much. My comrade may speak for himself. 490

*Stral.* (*fixing his eyes upon WERNER: then aside*). It  
cannot be! and yet he must be looked to.  
'Tis twenty years since I beheld him with  
These eyes; and, though my agents still have kept  
*Theirs* on him, policy has held aloof  
My own from his, not to alarm him into  
Suspicion of my plan. Why did I leave  
At Hamburg those who would have made assurance  
If this be he or no? I thought, ere now,  
To have been lord of Siegendorf, and parted  
In haste, though even the elements appear 500  
To fight against me, and this sudden flood  
May keep me prisoner here till——

[*He pauses and looks at WERNER: then resumes.*

This man must

Be watched. If it is he, he is so changed,  
His father, rising from his grave again,  
Would pass by him unknown. I must be wary:  
An error would spoil all.

*Iden.* Your Lordship seems  
Pensive. Will it not please you to pass on?

*Stral.* 'Tis past fatigue, which gives my weighed-down  
spirit

An outward show of thought. I will to rest.

*Iden.* The Prince's chamber is prepared, with all 510  
The very furniture the Prince used when  
Last here, in its full splendour.

(*Aside*). Somewhat tattered,  
And devilish damp, but fine enough by torch-light;  
And that's enough for your right noble blood  
Of twenty quarterings upon a hatchment;  
So let their bearer sleep 'neath something like one  
Now, as he one day will for ever lie.

*Stral.* (*rising and turning to GABOR*). Good night, good  
people! Sir, I trust to-morrow  
Will find me apter to requite your service.  
In the meantime I crave your company 520  
A moment in my chamber.

*Gab.* I attend you.

*Stral.* (after a few steps, pauses, and calls WERNER).

Friend!

*Wer.* Sir!

*Iden.* Sir! Lord—oh Lord! Why don't you say  
His Lordship, or his Excellency? Pray,  
My Lord, excuse this poor man's want of breeding:  
He hath not been accustomed to admission  
To such a presence.

*Stral.* (to IDENSTEIN). Peace, intendant!

*Iden.*

Oh!

I am dumb.

*Stral.* (to WERNER). Have you been long here?

*Wer.*

Long?

*Stral.*

I sought

An answer, not an echo.

*Wer.*

You may seek

Both from the walls. I am not used to answer

Those whom I know not.

*Stral.*

Indeed! Ne'er the less, 530

You might reply with courtesy to what

Is asked in kindness.

*Wer.*

When I know it such

I will requite—that is, *reply*—in unison.

*Stral.* The intendant said, you had been detained by  
sickness—

If I could aid you—journeying the same way?

*Wer.* (quickly). I am not journeying the same way!

*Stral.*

How know ye

That, ere you know my route?

*Wer.*

Because there is

But one way that the rich and poor must tread

Together. You diverged from that dread path

Some hours ago, and I some days: henceforth

Our roads must lie asunder, though they tend

All to one home.

540

*Stral.*

Your language is above

Your station.

*Wer.* (bitterly). Is it?

*Stral.*

Or, at least, beyond

Your garb.

*Wer.*

'Tis well that it is not beneath it,

As sometimes happens to the better clad.

But, in a word, what would you with me?

*Stral. (startled).* I?

*Wer.* Yes—you! You know me not, and question me,

And wonder that I answer not—not knowing  
My inquisitor. Explain what you would have,  
And then I'll satisfy yourself, or me.

*Stral.* I knew not that you had reasons for reserve. 550

*Wer.* Many have such :—Have you none?

*Stral.* None which can  
Interest a mere stranger.

*Wer.* Then forgive  
The same unknown and humble stranger, if  
He wishes to remain so to the man  
Who can have nought in common with him.

*Stral.* Sir,  
I will not balk your humour, though untoward :  
I only meant you service—but good night !  
Intendant, show the way! (*To GABOR.*) Sir, you will  
with me?

[*Exeunt STRALENHEIM and Attendants ; IDENSTEIN  
and GABOR.*]

*Wer. (solus).* 'Tis he! I am taken in the toils.  
Before 560

I quitted Hamburg, Giulio, his late steward,  
Informed me, that he had obtained an order  
From Brandenburg's elector, for the arrest  
Of Kruitznor (such the name I then bore) when  
I came upon the frontier; the free city  
Alone preserved my freedom—till I left  
Its walls—fool that I was to quit them! But  
I deemed this humble garb, and route obscure,  
Had baffled the slow hounds in their pursuit.  
What's to be done? He knows me not by person; 570  
Nor could aught, save the eye of apprehension,  
Have recognised *him*, after twenty years—  
We met so rarely and so coldly in  
Our youth. But those about him! Now I can  
Divine the frankness of the Hungarian, who  
No doubt is a mere tool and spy of Stralenheim's,

To sound and to secure me. Without means !  
Sick, poor—begirt too with the flooding rivers,  
Impassable even to the wealthy, with  
All the appliances which purchase modes 580  
Of overpowering peril, with men's lives,—  
How can I hope ! An hour ago methought  
My state beyond despair ; and now, 'tis such,  
The past seems paradise. Another day,  
And I'm detected,—on the very eve  
Of honours, rights, and my inheritance,  
When a few drops of gold might save me still  
In favouring an escape.

*Enter IDENSTEIN and FRITZ in conversation.*

*Fritz.* Immediately.

*Iden.* I tell you, 'tis impossible.

*Fritz.* It must  
Be tried, however ; and if one express 590  
Fail, you must send on others, till the answer  
Arrives from Frankfort, from the commandant.

*Iden.* I will do what I can.

*Fritz.* And recollect  
To spare no trouble ; you will be repaid  
Tenfold.

*Iden.* The Baron is retired to rest ?

*Fritz.* He hath thrown himself into an easy chair  
Beside the fire, and slumbers ; and has ordered  
He may not be disturbed until eleven,  
When he will take himself to bed.

*Iden.* Before  
An hour is past I'll do my best to serve him. 600

*Fritz.* Remember ! [Exit FRITZ.]

*Iden.* The devil take these great men ! they  
Think all things made for them. Now here must I  
Rouse up some half a dozen shivering vassals  
From their scant pallets, and, at peril of  
Their lives, despatch them o'er the river towards  
Frankfort. Methinks the Baron's own experience  
Some hours ago might teach him fellow-feeling :  
But no, "it *must*," and there's an end. How now ?



Are you there, Mynheer Werner?

*Wer.*

You have left

Your noble guest right quickly.

*Iden.*

Yes—he's dozing, 610

And seems to like that none should sleep besides.

Here is a packet for the Commandant

Of Frankfort, at all risks and all expenses;

But I must not lose time: Good night! [*Exit IDEN.*

*Wer.*

"To Frankfort!"

So, so, it thickens! Aye, "the Commandant!"

This tallies well with all the prior steps

Of this cool, calculating fiend, who walks

Between me and my father's house. No doubt

He writes for a detachment to convey me

Into some secret fortress.—Sooner than

620

This—

[*WERNER looks around, and snatches up a knife lying on a table in a recess.*

Now I am master of myself at least.

Hark,—footsteps! How do I know that Stralenheim

Will wait for even the show of that authority

Which is to overshadow usurpation?

That he suspects me's certain. I'm alone—

He with a numerous train: I weak—he strong

In gold, in numbers, rank, authority.

I nameless, or involving in my name

Destruction, till I reach my own domain;

He full-blown with his titles, which impose

630

Still further on these obscure petty burghers

Than they could do elsewhere. Hark! nearer still!

I'll to the secret passage, which communicates

With the—No! all is silent—'twas my fancy!—

Still as the breathless interval between

The flash and thunder:—I must hush my soul

Amidst its perils. Yet I will retire,

To see if still be unexplored the passage

I wot of: it will serve me as a den

Of secrecy for some hours, at the worst.

640

[*WERNER draws a panel, and exit, closing it after him.*

*Enter GABOR and JOSEPHINE.*

*Gab.* Where is your husband?

*Jos.* *Here,* I thought : I left him  
Not long since in his chamber. But these rooms  
Have many outlets, and he may be gone  
To accompany the Intendant.

*Gab.* Baron Strahlenheim  
Put many questions to the Intendant on  
The subject of your lord, and, to be plain,  
I have my doubts if he means well.

*Jos.* Alas !  
What can there be in common with the proud  
And wealthy Baron, and the unknown Werner ?

*Gab.* That you know best.

*Jos.* Or, if it were so, how 650  
Come you to stir yourself in his behalf,  
Rather than that of him whose life you saved ?

*Gab.* I helped to save him, as in peril ; but  
I did not pledge myself to serve him in  
Oppression. I know well these nobles, and  
Their thousand modes of trampling on the poor.  
I have proved them ; and my spirit boils up when  
I find them practising against the weak :—  
This is my only motive.

*Jos.* It would be  
Not easy to persuade my consort of 660  
Your good intentions.

*Gab.* Is he so suspicious ?

*Jos.* He was not once ; but time and troubles have  
Made him what you beheld.

*Gab.* I'm sorry for it.  
Suspicion is a heavy armour, and  
With its own weight impedes more than protects.  
Good night ! I trust to meet with him at day-break.

*[Exit GABOR.]*

*Re-enter IDENSTEIN and some Peasants. JOSEPHINE  
retires up the Hall.*

*First Peasant.* But if I'm drowned ?

*Iden.* Why, you will be well paid for 't,

And have risked more than drowning for as much,  
I doubt not.

*Second Peasant.* But our wives and families?

*Iden.* Cannot be worse off than they are, and may 670  
Be better.

*Third Peasant.* I have neither, and will venture.

*Iden.* That's right. A gallant carle, and fit to be  
A soldier. I'll promote you to the ranks  
In the Prince's body-guard—if you succeed :  
And you shall have besides, in sparkling coin,  
Two thalers.

*Third Peasant.* No more !

*Iden.* Out upon your avarice !  
Can that low vice alloy so much ambition?  
I tell thee, fellow, that two thalers in  
Small change will subdivide into a treasure.  
Do not five hundred thousand heroes daily 680  
Risk lives and souls for the tithe of one thaler ?  
When had you half the sum ?

*Third Peasant.* Never—but ne'er  
The less I must have three.

*Iden.* Have you forgot  
Whose vassal you were born, knave ?

*Third Peasant.* No—the Prince's,  
And not the stranger's.

*Iden.* Sirrah ! in the Prince's  
Absence, I am sovereign ; and the Baron is  
My intimate connection ;—"Cousin Idenstein !  
(Quoth he) you'll order out a dozen villains."  
And so, you villains ! troop—march—march, I say ;  
And if a single dog's ear of this packet 690  
Be sprinkled by the Oder—look to it !  
For every page of paper, shall a hide  
Of yours be stretched as parchment on a drum,  
Like Ziska's skin,<sup>1</sup> to beat alarm to all  
Refractory vassals, who can not effect  
Impossibilities.—Away, ye earth-worms !

[*Exit, driving them out.*]

*Jos. (coming forward).* I fain would shun these scenes,  
too oft repeated,

1. [Compare *Age of Bronze*, line 130, *vide post*, p. 549.]

Of feudal tyranny o'er petty victims ;  
I cannot aid, and will not witness such.  
Even here, in this remote, unnamed, dull spot, 700  
The dimmest in the district's map, exist  
The insolence of wealth in poverty  
O'er something poorer still—the pride of rank  
In servitude, o'er something still more servile ;  
And vice in misery affecting still  
A tattered splendour. What a state of being !  
In Tuscany, my own dear sunny land,  
Our nobles were but citizens and merchants,<sup>1</sup>  
Like Cosmo. We had evils, but not such  
As these ; and our all-ripe and gushing valleys 710  
Made poverty more cheerful, where each herb  
Was in itself a meal, and every vine  
Rained, as it were, the beverage which makes glad  
The heart of man ; and the ne'er unfelt sun  
(But rarely clouded, and when clouded, leaving  
His warmth behind in memory of his beams)  
Makes the worn mantle, and the thin robe, less  
Oppressive than an emperor's jewelled purple.  
But, here ! the despots of the north appear  
To imitate the ice-wind of their clime, 720  
Searching the shivering vassal through his rags,  
To wring his soul—as the bleak elements  
His form. And 'tis to be amongst these sovereigns  
My husband pants ! and such his pride of birth—  
That twenty years of usage, such as no  
Father born in a humble state could nerve  
His soul to persecute a son withal,  
Hath changed no atom of his early nature ;  
But I, born nobly also, from my father's  
Kindness was taught a different lesson. Father ! 730  
May thy long-tried and now rewarded spirit  
Look down on us and our so long desired  
Ulric ! I love my son, as thou didst me !  
What's that ? Thou, Werner ! can it be ? and thus ?

1. [For the "merchant dukes" of Florence, see *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza lx. line 4. See, too, *ibid.*, stanza xlviii. line 8, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 375, and 365, note 1.]

*Enter WERNER hastily, with the knife in his hand, by the secret panel, which he closes hurriedly after him.*

*Wer. (not at first recognising her).* Discovered ! then  
I'll stab—*(recognising her).*

Ah ! Josephine

Why art thou not at rest ?

*Jos.* What rest ? My God !

What doth this mean ?

*Wer. (showing a rouleau).* Here's gold—gold, Josephine,  
Will rescue us from this detested dungeon.

*Jos.* And how obtained ?—that knife !

*Wer.* 'Tis bloodless—*yet.*

Away—we must to our chamber.

*Jos.* But whence comest thou ? 740

*Wer.* Ask not ! but let us think where we shall go—  
This—this will make us way—*(showing the gold)*—I'll fit  
them now.

*Jos.* I dare not think thee guilty of dishonour.

*Wer.* Dishonour !

*Jos.* I have said it.

*Wer.* Let us hence :

'Tis the last night, I trust, that we need pass here.

*Jos.* And not the worst, I hope.

*Wer.* Hope ! I make *sure.*

But let us to our chamber.

*Jos.* Yet one question—

What hast thou *done* ?

*Wer. (fiercely).* Left one thing *undone*, which  
Had made all well : let me not think of it !

Away !

*Jos.* Alas that I should doubt of thee !

750  
[*Exeunt.*

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the same Palace.**Enter IDENSTEIN and Others.*

*Iden.* Fine doings ! goodly doings ! honest doings !  
A Baron pillaged in a Prince's palace !  
Where, till this hour, such a sin ne'er was heard of.

*Fritz.* It hardly could, unless the rats despoiled  
The mice of a few shreds of tapestry.

*Iden.* Oh ! that I e'er should live to see this day !  
The honour of our city's gone for ever.

*Fritz.* Well, but now to discover the delinquent :  
The Baron is determined not to lose  
This sum without a search.

*Iden.* And so am I. 10

*Fritz.* But whom do you suspect ?

*Iden.* Suspect ! all people  
Without—within—above—below—Heaven help me !

*Fritz.* Is there no other entrance to the chamber ?

*Iden.* None whatsoever.

*Fritz.* Are you sure of that ?

*Iden.* Certain. I have lived and served here since my  
birth,  
And if there were such, must have heard of such,  
Or seen it.

*Fritz.* Then it must be some one who  
Had access to the antechamber.

*Iden.* Doubtless.

*Fritz.* The man called *Werner's* poor !

*Iden.* Poor as a miser.<sup>1</sup> 20  
But lodged so far off, in the other wing,  
By which there's no communication with  
The baron's chamber, that it can't be he.  
Besides, I bade him "good night" in the hall,

1. ["Your printer has made one odd mistake :—'poor as a *Mouse*' instead of 'poor as a *Miser*.' The expression may seem strange, but it is only a translation of '*Semper avarus eget !*'" (Hor., *Epist.* I. ii. 56).—Letter to Murray, May 29, 1822, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 75.]

Almost a mile off, and which only leads  
To his own apartment, about the same time  
When this burglarious, larcenous felony  
Appears to have been committed.

*Fritz.* There 's another,  
The stranger——

*Iden.* The Hungarian?

*Fritz.* He who helped  
To fish the baron from the Oder.

*Iden.* Not  
Unlikely. But, hold——might it not have been 30  
One of the suite?

*Fritz.* How? *We*, sir!

*Iden.* No—not *you*,  
But some of the inferior knaves. You say  
The Baron was asleep in the great chair—  
The velvet chair—in his embroidered night-gown;  
His toilet spread before him, and upon it  
A cabinet with letters, papers, and  
Several rouleaux of gold; of which *one* only  
Has disappeared:—the door unbolted, with  
No difficult access to any.

*Fritz.* Good sir,  
Be not so quick; the honour of the corps 40  
Which forms the Baron's household's unimpeached  
From steward to scullion, save in the fair way  
Of peculation; such as in accompts,  
Weights, measures, larder, cellar, buttery,  
Where all men take their prey; as also in  
Postage of letters, gathering of rents,  
Purveying feasts, and understanding with  
The honest trades who furnish noble masters;<sup>1</sup>  
But for your petty, picking, downright thievery,  
We scorn it as we do board wages. Then 50  
Had one of our folks done it, he would not  
Have been so poor a spirit as to hazard  
His neck for *one* rouleau, but have swooped all;  
Also the cabinet, if portable.

*Iden.* There is some sense in that——

*Fritz.* No, Sir, be sure

1. — who furnish our good masters.—[*MS. M.*]

'Twas none of our corps ; but some petty, trivial  
Picker and stealer, without art or genius.  
The only question is—Who else could have  
Access, save the Hungarian and yourself?

*Iden.* You don't mean me ?

*Fritz.* No, sir ; I honour more 60  
Your talents——

*Iden.* And my principles, I hope.

*Fritz.* Of course. But to the point: What's to be  
done ?

*Iden.* Nothing—but there's a good deal to be said.  
We'll offer a reward ; move heaven and earth,  
And the police (though there's none nearer than  
Frankfort) ; post notices in manuscript  
(For we've no printer) ; and set by my clerk  
To read them (for few can, save he and I).  
We'll send out villains to strip beggars, and  
Search empty pockets ; also, to arrest 70  
All gipsies, and ill-clothed and sallow people.  
Prisoners we'll have at least, if not the culprit ;  
And for the Baron's gold—if 'tis not found,  
At least he shall have the full satisfaction  
Of melting twice its substance in the raising  
The ghost of this rouleau. Here's alchemy  
For your Lord's losses !

*Fritz.* He hath found a better.

*Iden.* Where ?

*Fritz.* In a most immense inheritance.  
The late Count Siegendorf, his distant kinsman,  
Is dead near Prague, in his castle, and my Lord 80  
Is on his way to take possession.

*Iden.* Was there  
No heir ?

*Fritz.* Oh, yes ; but he has disappeared  
Long from the world's eye, and, perhaps, the world.  
A prodigal son, beneath his father's ban  
For the last twenty years ; for whom his sire  
Refused to kill the fatted calf ; and, therefore,  
If living, he must chew the husks still. But  
The Baron would find means to silence him,  
Were he to re-appear : he's politic,



And has much influence with a certain court. 90

*Iden.* He 's fortunate.

*Fritz.* 'Tis true, there is a grandson,  
Whom the late Count reclaimed from his son's hands,  
And educated as his heir ; but, then,  
His birth is doubtful.

*Iden.* How so ?

*Fritz.* His sire made  
A left-hand, love, imprudent sort of marriage,  
With an Italian exile's dark-eyed daughter :  
Noble, they say, too ; but no match for such  
A house as Siegendorf's. The grandsire ill  
Could brook the alliance ; and could ne'er be brought  
To see the parents, though he took the son. 100

*Iden.* If he 's a lad of mettle, he may yet  
Dispute your claim, and weave a web that may  
Puzzle your Baron to unravel.

*Fritz.* Why,  
For mettle, he has quite enough : they say,  
He forms a happy mixture of his sire  
And grandsire's qualities,—impetuous as  
The former, and deep as the latter ; but  
The strangest is, that he too disappeared  
Some months ago.

*Iden.* The devil he did !

*Fritz.* Why, yes :  
It must have been at *his* suggestion, at 110  
An hour so critical as was the eve  
Of the old man's death, whose heart was broken by it.

*Iden.* Was there no cause assigned ?

*Fritz.* Plenty, no doubt,  
And none, perhaps, the true one. Some averred  
It was to seek his parents ; some because  
The old man held his spirit in so strictly  
(But that could scarce be, for he doted on him) ;  
A third believed he wished to serve in war,  
But, peace being made soon after his departure,  
He might have since returned, were that the motive ; 120  
A fourth set charitably have surmised,  
As there was something strange and mystic in him,  
That in the wild exuberance of his nature

He had joined the black bands,<sup>1</sup> who lay waste Lusatia,  
 The mountains of Bohemia and Silesia,  
 Since the last years of war had dwindled into  
 A kind of general condottiero system  
 Of bandit-warfare; each troop with its chief,  
 And all against mankind.

*Iden.*

That cannot be.

A young heir, bred to wealth and luxury, 130  
 To risk his life and honours with disbanded  
 Soldiers and desperadoes!

*Fritz.*

Heaven best knows!

But there are human natures so allied  
 Unto the savage love of enterprise,  
 That they will seek for peril as a pleasure.  
 I've heard that nothing can reclaim your Indian,  
 Or tame the tiger, though their infancy  
 Were fed on milk and honey. After all,  
 Your Wallenstein, your Tilly and Gustavus,  
 Your Banner, and your Torstenson and Weimar,<sup>2</sup> 140

1. [The Swedish garrisons did not evacuate Bohemia till 1649, and then, as their occupation was gone, with considerable reluctance. "It need not, therefore, be a matter of wonder that from the discharged soldiers numerous bands of robbers [*'bande nere,'* or 'black bands': see *Deformed Transformed*, Part II. sc. 1. line 65] were formed; that these pursued on their own account the trade that they had formerly carried on under the cover of military law, and that commerce became again unsafe on the highways."—*History of the Thirty Years' War*, by A. Gindely, 1885, ii. 382, 383.]

2. [Albrecht Wenceslaus Eusebius, Count of Waldstein, Duke of Mecklenburg, quartermaster of the Imperial Army in the Thirty Years' War, was born in Bohemia, September 15, 1583, and assassinated at Egra, February 25, 1634.]

Johann Tserclas Count von Tilly, born 1559, defeated the Bohemians at the battle of Prague, November 8, 1620, died April 30, 1632.

Gustavus Adolphus, the "Lion of the North," born December 9, 1594, succeeded his father, Charles IX., King of Sweden, in 1611. As head of the Protestant League, he invaded Germany, defeated the armies of Conti and Schaumburg, June–December, 1630; defeated Tilly at Leipzig and Breitenfeld, September 7, 1631; defeated Wallenstein at Lutzen; but was killed in battle, November 16, 1632.

Johan Banner, or Baner, Swedish general, born June 23, 1595, defeated the Saxons near Chemnitz, April 4, 1639, died December, 1649.

Lennart Torstenson, Swedish general, born 1603, fought at the battle of Leipzig, and was taken prisoner at Nürnberg. In 1641 he was appointed General-in-Chief of the Swedes in Germany, and died at Stockholm, April, 1651.

Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, born 1604, succeeded Gustavus

Were but the same thing upon a grand scale ;  
And now that they are gone, and peace proclaimed,  
They who would follow the same pastime must  
Pursue it on their own account. Here comes  
The Baron, and the Saxon stranger, who  
Was his chief aid in yesterday's escape,  
But did not leave the cottage by the Oder  
Until this morning.

*Enter STRALENHEIM and ULRIC.*

*Stral.* Since you have refused  
All compensation, gentle stranger, save  
Inadequate thanks, you almost check even them, 150  
Making me feel the worthlessness of words,  
And blush at my own barren gratitude,  
They seem so niggardly, compared with what  
Your courteous courage did in my behalf——

*Ulr.* I pray you press the theme no further.

*Stral.* But  
Can I not serve you? You are young, and of  
That mould which throws out heroes ; fair in favour ;  
Brave, I know, by my living now to say so ;  
And, doubtlessly, with such a form and heart,  
Would look into the fiery eyes of War, 160  
As ardently for glory as you dared  
An obscure death to save an unknown stranger,  
In an as perilous, but opposite, element.  
You are made for the service : I have served ;  
Have rank by birth and soldiership, and friends,  
Who shall be yours. 'Tis true this pause of peace  
Favours such views at present scantily ;  
But 'twill not last, men's spirits are too stirring ;  
And, after thirty years of conflict, peace  
Is but a petty war, as the time shows us 170  
In every forest, or a mere armed truce.  
War will reclaim his own ; and, in the meantime,  
You might obtain a post, which would ensure

Adolphus in command in Germany, November 16, 1632 ; defeated the Imperialists at Rheinfeld, 1638 ; died at Huningen, 1639.

Banier and Torstenson were living when the Peace of Westphalia was proclaimed, November 3, 1648.]

A higher soon, and, by my influence, fail not  
To rise. I speak of Brandenburg, wherein  
I stand well with the Elector;<sup>1</sup> in Bohemia,  
Like you, I am a stranger, and we are now  
Upon its frontier.

*Ulr.* You perceive my garb  
Is Saxon, and, of course, my service due  
To my own Sovereign. If I must decline  
Your offer, 'tis with the same feeling which  
Induced it.

180

*Stral.* Why, this is mere usury!  
I owe my life to you, and you refuse  
The acquittance of the interest of the debt,  
To heap more obligations on me, till  
I bow beneath them.

*Ulr.* You shall say so when  
I claim the payment.

*Stral.* Well, sir, since you will not—  
You are nobly born?

*Ulr.* I have heard my kinsmen say so.

*Stral.* Your actions show it. Might I ask your name?

*Ulr.* Ulric.

*Stral.* Your house's?

*Ulr.* When I'm worthy of it, 190  
I'll answer you.

*Stral. (aside).* Most probably an Austrian,  
Whom these unsettled times forbid to boast  
His lineage on these wild and dangerous frontiers,  
Where the name of his country is abhorred.

[*Aloud to FRITZ and IDENSTEIN.*

So, sirs! how have ye sped in your researches?

*Iden.* Indifferent well, your Excellency.

*Stral.* Then  
I am to deem the plunderer is caught?

*Iden.* Humph!—not exactly.

*Stral.* Or, at least, suspected?

*Iden.* Oh! for that matter, very much suspected.

*Stral.* Who may he be?

1. [George William, Elector of Brandenburg (1595-1640), was in alliance with Gustavus Adolphus; John George, Elector of Saxony (1585-1656) (*vide supra*, line 179), was on the side of the Imperialists.]

*Iden.* Why, don't *you* know, my Lord? 200

*Stral.* How should I? I was fast asleep.

*Iden.* And so

Was I—and that 's the cause I know no more  
Than does your Excellency.

*Stral.* Dolt !

*Iden.* Why, if

Your Lordship, being robbed, don't recognise  
The rogue ; how should I, not being robbed, identify  
The thief among so many ? In the crowd,  
May it please your Excellency, your thief looks  
Exactly like the rest, or rather better :

'Tis only at the bar and in the dungeon,  
That wise men know your felon by his features ; 210  
But I'll engage, that if seen there but once,  
Whether he be found criminal or no,  
His face shall be so.

*Stral.* (to FRITZ). Prithee, Fritz, inform me  
What hath been done to trace the fellow ?

*Fritz.* Faith !

My Lord, not much as yet, except conjecture.

*Stral.* Besides the loss (which, I must own, affects me  
Just now materially), I needs would find  
The villain out of public motives ; for  
So dexterous a spoiler, who could creep  
Through my attendants, and so many peopled 220  
And lighted chambers, on my rest, and snatch  
The gold before my scarce-closed eyes, would soon  
Leave bare your borough, Sir Intendant !

*Iden.* True ;

If there were aught to carry off, my Lord.

*Ulr.* What is all this ?

*Stral.* You joined us but this morning,  
And have not heard that I was robbed last night.

*Ulr.* Some rumour of it reached me as I passed  
The outer chambers of the palace, but  
I know no further.

*Stral.* It is a strange business :  
The Intendant can inform you of the facts. 230

*Iden.* Most willingly. You see——

*Stral.* (*impatiently*). Defer your tale,

Till certain of the hearer's patience.

*Iden.*

That

Can only be approved by proofs. You see——

*Stral. (again interrupting him, and addressing ULRIC).*

In short, I was asleep upon my chair,  
My cabinet before me, with some gold  
Upon it (more than I much like to lose,  
Though in part only) : some ingenious person  
Contrived to glide through all my own attendants,  
Besides those of the place, and bore away  
A hundred golden ducats, which to find  
I would be fain, and there 's an end. Perhaps  
You (as I still am rather faint) would add  
To yesterday's great obligation, this,  
Though slighter, yet not slight, to aid these men  
(Who seem but lukewarm) in recovering it?

240

*Ulr.* Most willingly, and without loss of time—  
(*To IDENSTEIN.*) Come hither, mynheer!

*Iden.*

But so much haste bodes

Right little speed, and——

*Ulr.*

Standing motionless

None; so let's march: we'll talk as we go on.

*Iden.* But——

*Ulr.* Show the spot, and then I'll answer you. 250

*Fritz.* I will, sir, with his Excellency's leave.

*Stral.* Do so, and take yon old ass with you.

*Fritz.*

Hence!

*Ulr.* Come on, old oracle, expound thy riddle!

[*Exit with IDENSTEIN and FRITZ.*

*Stral. (solus).* A stalwart, active, soldier-looking  
stripling,

Handsome as Hercules ere his first labour,  
And with a brow of thought beyond his years  
When in repose, till his eye kindles up  
In answering yours. I wish I could engage him:  
I have need of some such spirits near me now,  
For this inheritance is worth a struggle. 260  
And though I am not the man to yield without one,  
Neither are they who now rise up between me  
And my desire. The boy, they say, 's a bold one;  
But he hath played the truant in some hour

Of freakish folly, leaving fortune to  
Champion his claims. That's well. The father, whom  
For years I've tracked, as does the blood-hound, never  
In sight, but constantly in scent, had put me  
To fault; but *here* I *have* him, and that's better.  
It must be *he*! All circumstance proclaims it; 270  
And careless voices, knowing not the cause  
Of my enquiries, still confirm it.—Yes!  
The man, his bearing, and the mystery  
Of his arrival, and the time; the account, too,  
The Intendant gave (for I have not beheld her)  
Of his wife's dignified but foreign aspect;  
Besides the antipathy with which we met,  
As snakes and lions shrink back from each other  
By secret instinct that both must be foes  
Deadly, without being natural prey to either; 280  
All—all—confirm it to my mind. However,  
We'll grapple, ne'ertheless. In a few hours  
The order comes from Frankfort, if these waters  
Rise not the higher (and the weather favours  
Their quick abatement), and I'll have him safe  
Within a dungeon, where he may avouch  
His real estate and name; and there's no harm done,  
Should he prove other than I deem. This robbery  
(Save for the actual loss) is lucky also;  
He's poor, and that's suspicious—he's unknown, 290  
And that's defenceless.—True, we have no proofs  
Of guilt—but what hath he of innocence?  
Were he a man indifferent to my prospects,  
In other bearings, I should rather lay  
The inculcation on the Hungarian, who  
Hath something which I like not; and alone  
Of all around, except the Intendant, and  
The Prince's household and my own, had ingress  
Familiar to the chamber.

*Enter GABOR.*

Friend, how fare you?

*Gab.* As those who fare well everywhere, when they  
Have supped and slumbered, no great matter how— 301

And you, my Lord?

*Stral.* Better in rest than purse :  
Mine inn is like to cost me dear.

*Gab.* I heard  
Of your late loss ; but 'tis a trifle to  
One of your order.

*Stral.* You would hardly think so,  
Were the loss yours.

*Gab.* I never had so much  
(At once) in my whole life, and therefore am not  
Fit to decide. But I came here to seek you.  
Your couriers are turned back—I have outstripped them,  
In my return.

*Stral.* You !—Why?

*Gab.* I went at daybreak, 310  
To watch for the abatement of the river,  
As being anxious to resume my journey.  
Your messengers were all checked like myself ;  
And, seeing the case hopeless, I await  
The current's pleasure.

*Stral.* Would the dogs were in it !  
Why did they not, at least, attempt the passage ?  
I ordered this at all risks.

*Gab.* Could you order  
The Oder to divide, as Moses did  
The Red Sea (scarcely redder than the flood  
Of the swoln stream), and be obeyed, perhaps 320  
They might have ventured.

*Stral.* I must see to it :  
The knaves ! the slaves !—but they shall smart for this.

[*Exit STRALENHEIM.*]

*Gab. (solus).* There goes my noble, feudal, self-willed  
Baron !

Epitome of what brave chivalry  
The preux Chevaliers of the good old times  
Have left us. Yesterday he would have given  
His lands <sup>1</sup> (if he hath any), and, still dearer,

1. [Compare *The Antiquary*, by Sir W. Scott, i. 366, chap. vii. ed. 1851 : "' Good man,' said Sir Arthur, ' can you think of nothing?—of no help?—I'll make you rich—I'll give you a farm—I'll——' ' Our riches will soon be equal,' said the beggar, looking upon the strife of



His sixteen quarterings, for as much fresh air  
 As would have filled a bladder, while he lay  
 Gurgling and foaming half way through the window 330  
 Of his o'erset and water-logged conveyance ;  
 And now he storms at half a dozen wretches  
 Because they love their lives too ! Yet, he 's right :  
 'Tis strange they should, when such as he may put them  
 To hazard at his pleasure. Oh, thou world !  
 Thou art indeed a melancholy jest ! [Exit GABOR.

SCENE II.—*The Apartment of WERNER, in the Palace.*

*Enter JOSEPHINE and ULRIC.*

*Jos.* Stand back, and let me look on thee again !  
 My Utric !—my belovéd !—can it be—  
 After twelve years ?

*Ulr.* My dearest mother !

*Jos.* Yes !

My dream is realised—how beautiful !—  
 How more than all I sighed for ! Heaven receive  
 A mother's thanks ! a mother's tears of joy !  
 This is indeed thy work !—At such an hour, too,  
 He comes not only as a son, but saviour.

*Ulr.* If such a joy await me, it must double  
 What I now feel, and lighten from my heart 10  
 A part of the long debt of duty, not  
 Of love (for that was ne'er withheld)—forgive me !  
 This long delay was not my fault.

*Jos.* I know it,  
 But cannot think of sorrow now, and doubt  
 If I e'er felt it, 'tis so dazzled from  
 My memory by this oblivious transport !—  
 My son !

the waters, 'They are sae already ; for I hae nae land, and you would  
 give your fair bounds and barony for a square yard of rock that would  
 be dry for twal hours.'"—*The Antiquary* was published in 1816, six  
 years before the second version of *Werner* was written, and ten years  
 after the death of the Duchess of Devonshire.]

*Enter WERNER.*

*Wer.* What have we here,—more strangers?—

*Jos.* No!

Look upon him! What do you see?

*Wer.* A stripling,  
For the first time—

*Ulr. (kneeling).* For twelve long years, my father!

*Wer.* Oh, God!

*Jos.* He faints!

*Wer.* No—I am better now— 20  
*Ulr.!* (*Embraces him.*)

*Ulr.* My father, Siegendorf!

*Wer. (startling).* Hush! boy—  
The walls may hear that name!

*Ulr.* What then?

*Wer.* Why, then—

But we will talk of that anon. Remember,  
I must be known here but as Werner. Come!  
Come to my arms again! Why, thou look'st all  
I should have been, and was not. Josephine!  
Sure 'tis no father's fondness dazzles me;  
But, had I seen that form amid ten thousand  
Youth of the choicest, my heart would have chosen  
This for my son!

*Ulr.* And yet you knew me not! 30

*Wer.* Alas! I have had that upon my soul  
Which makes me look on all men with an eye  
That only knows the evil at first glance.

*Ulr.* My memory served me far more fondly: I  
Have not forgotten aught; and oft-times in  
The proud and princely halls of—(I'll not name them,  
As you say that 'tis perilous)—but i' the pomp  
Of your sire's feudal mansion, I looked back  
To the Bohemian mountains many a sunset,  
And wept to see another day go down 40  
O'er thee and me, with those huge hills between us.  
They shall not part us more.

*Wer.* I know not that.  
Are you aware my father is no more?

*Ulr.* Oh, Heavens! I left him in a green old age,

And looking like the oak, worn, but still steady  
Amidst the elements, whilst younger trees  
Fell fast around him. 'Twas scarce three months since.

*Wer.* Why did you leave him?

*Jos. (embracing ULRIC).* Can you ask that question?  
Is he not *here*?

*Wer.* True; he hath sought his parents,  
And found them; but, oh! *how*, and in what state! 50

*Ulr.* All shall be bettered. What we have to do  
Is to proceed, and to assert our rights,  
Or rather yours; for I waive all, unless  
Your father has disposed in such a sort  
Of his broad lands as to make mine the foremost,  
So that I must prefer my claim for form:  
But I trust better, and that all is yours.

*Wer.* Have you not heard of Stralenheim?

*Ulr.* I saved  
His life but yesterday: he's here.

*Wer.* You saved  
The serpent who will sting us all!

*Ulr.* You speak 60  
Riddles: what is this Stralenheim to us?

*Wer.* Every thing. One who claims our father's lands:  
Our distant kinsman, and our nearest foe.

*Ulr.* I never heard his name till now. The Count,  
Indeed, spoke sometimes of a kinsman, who,  
If his own line should fail, might be remotely  
Involved in the succession; but his titles  
Were never named before me—and what then?  
His right must yield to ours.

*Wer.* Aye, if at Prague:  
But here he is all-powerful; and has spread 70  
Snarers for thy father, which, if hitherto  
He hath escaped them, is by fortune, not  
By favour.

*Ulr.* Doth he personally know you?

*Wer.* No; but he guesses shrewdly at my person,  
As he betrayed last night; and I, perhaps,  
But owe my temporary liberty  
To his uncertainty.

*Ulr.* I think you wrong him

(Excuse me for the phrase); but Stralenheim  
Is not what you prejudge him, or, if so,  
He owes me something both for past and present. 80  
I saved his life, he therefore trusts in me.  
He hath been plundered too, since he came hither :  
Is sick, a stranger, and as such not now  
Able to trace the villain who hath robbed him :  
I have pledged myself to do so ; and the business  
Which brought me here was chiefly that :<sup>1</sup> but I  
Have found, in searching for another's dross,  
My own whole treasure—you, my parents !

*Wer. (agitatedly).* Who

Taught you to mouth that name of "villain?"

*Ulr.* What

More noble name belongs to common thieves? 90

*Wer.* Who taught you thus to brand an unknown being  
With an infernal stigma?

*Ulr.* My own feelings

Taught me to name a ruffian from his deeds.

*Wer.* Who taught you, long-sought and ill-found boy !  
that

It would be safe for my own son to insult me?

*Ulr.* I named a villain. What is there in common  
With such a being and my father?

*Wer.* Every thing !

That ruffian is thy father !<sup>2</sup>

*Jos.* Oh, my son !

Believe him not—and yet !—— (*her voice falters.*)

1. [The following is the original passage in the novel :—" 'Stralenheim,' said Conrad, 'does not appear to me altogether the man you take him for:—but were it even otherwise, he owes me gratitude not only for the past, but for what he supposes to be my present employment. I saved his life, and he therefore places confidence in me. He has been robbed last night—is sick—a stranger—and in no condition to discover the villain who has plundered him . . . and the business on which I sought the Intendant was chiefly that.'"—*Canterbury Tales*, by Sophia and Harriet Lee, 1838, ii. 203, 204.]

2. [ "'And who,' said he, 'has entitled you to brand thus with ignominious epithets a being you do not know? Who . . . has taught you that it would be safe even for my son to insult me?'—'It is not necessary to know the person of a ruffian,' replied Conrad, indignantly, 'to give him the appellation he merits:—and what is there in common between my father and such a character?'—'Everything,' said Siegen-dorf, bitterly,—'for that ruffian was your father !'"—*Ibid.*, p. 204.]

*Ulr. (starts, looks earnestly at WERNER and then says slowly).* And you avow it?

*Wer.* Ulric, before you dare despise your father, 100  
Learn to divine and judge his actions. Young,  
Rash, new to life, and reared in Luxury's lap,  
Is it for you to measure Passion's force,  
Or Misery's temptation? Wait—(not long,  
It cometh like the night, and quickly)—Wait!—  
Wait till, like me, your hopes are blighted<sup>1</sup> till  
Sorrow and Shame are handmaids of your cabin—  
Famine and Poverty your guests at table;  
Despair your bed-fellow—then rise, but not  
From sleep, and judge! Should that day e'er arrive— 110  
Should you see then the Serpent, who hath coiled  
Himself around all that is dear and noble  
Of you and yours, lie slumbering in your path,  
With but *his* folds between your steps and happiness,  
When *he*, who lives but to tear from you name,  
Lands, life itself, lies at your mercy, with  
Chance your conductor—midnight for your mantle—  
The bare knife in your hand, and earth asleep,  
Even to your deadliest foe; and he as 'twere  
Inviting death, by looking like it, while 120  
His death alone can save you:—Thank your God!  
If then, like me, content with petty plunder,  
You turn aside—I did so.

*Ulr.*

But——

*Wer. (abruptly).*

Hear me!

I will not brook a human voice—scarce dare  
Listen to my own (if that be human still)—

1. [“Conrad . . . before you thus presume to chastise me with your eye, learn to understand my actions! Young, and inexperienced in the world—reposing hitherto in the bosom of indulgence and luxury, is it for *you* to judge of the impulse of the passions, or the temptations of misery? Wait till, like me, you have blighted your fairest hopes—have endured humiliation and sorrow—poverty and insult—before you pretend to judge of their effect on you! Should that miserable day ever arrive—should *you* see the being at your mercy who stands between you and everything that is dear or noble in life!—who is ready to tear from you your name—your inheritance—your very life itself—congratulate your own heart, if, like me, you are content with petty plunder, and are not tempted to exterminate a serpent, who now lives, perhaps to sting us all.”—*Canterbury Tales*, by Sophia and Harriet Lee, 1838, ii. 204, 205.]

Hear me! you do not know this man—I do.<sup>1</sup>  
 He's mean, deceitful, avaricious. You  
 Deem yourself safe, as young and brave; but learn  
 None are secure from desperation, few  
 From subtilty. My worst foe, Stralenheim, 130  
 Housed in a Prince's palace, couched within  
 A Prince's chamber, lay below my knife!  
 An instant—a mere motion—the least impulse—  
 Had swept him and all fears of mine from earth.  
 He was within my power—my knife was raised—  
 Withdrawn—and I'm in his:—are you not so?  
 Who tells you that he knows you *not*? Who says  
 He hath not lured you here to end you? or  
 To plunge you, with your parents, in a dungeon?  
[*He pauses.*]

*Ulr.* Proceed—proceed!

*Wer.* *Me* he hath ever known, 140  
 And hunted through each change of time—name—  
 fortune—  
 And why not *you*? Are you more versed in men?  
 He wound snares round me; flung along my path  
 Reptiles, whom, in my youth, I would have spurned  
 Even from my presence; but, in spurning now,  
 Fill only with fresh venom. Will you be  
 More patient? *Ulr.*!—*Ulr.*!—there are crimes  
 Made venial by the occasion, and temptations  
 Which nature cannot master or forbear.<sup>2</sup>

1. [“‘You do not know this man,’ continued he; ‘I do!—I believe him to be mean—sordid—deceitful! You will conceive yourself safe, because you are young and brave! Learn, however, . . . none are so secure but desperation or subtilty may reach them! Stralenheim, in the palace of a prince, was in my power! My knife was held over him—a single moment would have swept him from the face of the earth, and with him all my future fears:—I forbore—and I am now in his.—Are you certain that you are not so too? Who assures you he does not know you?—who tells you that he has not lured you into his society, either to rid himself of you for ever, or to plunge you with your family into a dungeon?’”—*Canterbury Tales*, by Sophia and Harriet Lee, 1838, ii. 205. It should be noted that this and other passages from Miss Lee's story, which have been selected for comparison with the text, are to be regarded as representative parallels—samples of a far more extended adaptation. *Vide ante*, “The Introduction to *Werner*,” p. 326.]

2. [“‘*Me* . . . he has known invariably through every change of fortune or of name—and why not you?—*Me* he has entrapped—are you more

*Ulr.* (*who looks first at him and then at JOSEPHINE*).  
My mother!

*Wer.* Ah! I thought so: you have now 150  
Only one parent. I have lost alike  
Father and son, and stand alone.

*Ulr.* But stay!

[*WERNER rushes out of the chamber.*]

*Jos.* (*to ULRIC*). Follow him not, until this storm of  
passion

Abates. Think'st thou, that were it well for him,  
I had not followed?

*Ulr.* I obey you, mother,  
Although reluctantly. My first act shall not  
Be one of disobedience.

*Jos.* Oh! he is good!  
Condemn him not from his own mouth, but trust  
To me, who have borne so much with him, and for him,  
That this is but the surface of his soul, 160  
And that the depth is rich in better things.

*Ulr.* These then are but my father's principles? <sup>1</sup>  
My mother thinks not with him?

*Jos.* Nor doth he  
Think as he speaks. Alas! long years of grief  
Have made him sometimes thus.

*Ulr.* Explain to me  
More clearly, then, these claims of Stralenheim,  
That, when I see the subject in its bearings,  
I may prepare to face him, or at least  
To extricate you from your present perils.  
I pledge myself to accomplish this—but would 170  
I had arrived a few hours sooner!

*Jos.* Aye!  
Hadst thou but done so!

discreet? He has wound the snares of Idenstein around me:—of a reptile, whom, a few years ago, I would have spurned from my presence, and whom, in spurning now, I have furnished with fresh venom:—will *you* be more patient?—Conrad, Conrad, there are crimes rendered venial by the occasion, and temptations too exquisite for human fortitude to master or endure.”—*Canterbury Tales*, by Sophia and Harriet Lee, 1838, ii. 205.]

1. [“These are only the systems of my father. . . My mother thinks not with him?”—*Ibid.*, p. 206.]

*Enter GABOR and IDENSTEIN, with Attendants.*

*Gab.* (to *ULRIC*). I have sought you, comrade.  
So this is my reward!

*Ulr.* What do you mean?

*Gab.* 'Sdeath! have I lived to these years, and for this!  
(To *IDENSTEIN*.) But for your age and folly, I would——

*Iden.* Help!  
Hands off! Touch an Intendant!

*Gab.* Do not think  
I'll honour you so much as save your throat  
From the Ravenstone<sup>1</sup> by choking you myself.

*Iden.* I thank you for the respite: but there are  
Those who have greater need of it than me. 180

*Ulr.* Unriddle this vile wrangling, or——

*Gab.* At once, then,  
The Baron has been robbed, and upon me  
This worthy personage has deigned to fix  
His kind suspicions—me! whom he ne'er saw  
Till yester evening.

*Iden.* Wouldst have me suspect  
My own acquaintances? You have to learn  
That I keep better company.

*Gab.* You shall  
Keep the best shortly, and the last for all men,  
The worms! You hound of malice!

[*GABOR seizes on him.*  
*Ulr.* (interfering). Nay, no violence:  
He's old, unarmed—be temperate, Gabor!

*Gab.* (letting go *IDENSTEIN*). True: 190  
I am a fool to lose myself because  
Fools deem me knave: it is their homage.

*Ulr.* (to *IDENSTEIN*). How  
Fare you?

*Iden.* Help!

*Ulr.* I have helped you.

1. The Ravenstone, "Rabenstein," is the stone gibbet of Germany, and so called from the ravens perching on it. [Compare *Manfred*, act iii., First Version, *Poetical Works*, 1801, iv. 122.]



*Iden.* Kill him ! then  
I'll say so.  
*Gab.* I am calm—live on !  
*Iden.* That 's more  
Than you shall do, if there be judge or judgment  
In Germany. The Baron shall decide !  
*Gab.* Does *he* abet you in your accusation ?  
*Iden.* Does he not ?  
*Gab.* Then next time let him go sink  
Ere I go hang for snatching him from drowning.  
But here he comes !

*Enter STRALENHEIM.*

*Gab. (goes up to him).* My noble Lord, I'm here ! 200  
*Stral.* Well, sir !  
*Gab.* Have you aught with me ?  
*Stral.* What should I  
Have with you ?  
*Gab.* You know best, if yesterday's  
Flood has not washed away your memory ;  
But that 's a trifle. I stand here accused,  
In phrases not equivocal, by yon  
Intendant, of the pillage of your person  
Or chamber :—is the charge your own or his ?  
*Stral.* I accuse no man.  
*Gab.* Then you acquit me, Baron ?  
*Stral.* I know not whom to accuse, or to acquit,  
Or scarcely to suspect.  
*Gab.* But you at least 210  
Should know whom *not* to suspect. I am insulted—  
Oppressed here by these menials, and I look  
To you for remedy—teach them their duty !  
To look for thieves at home were part of it,  
If duly taught ; but, in one word, if I  
Have an accuser, let it be a man  
Worthy to be so of a man like me.  
I am your equal.  
*Stral.* You !  
*Gab.* Aye, sir ; and, for  
Aught that you know, superior ; but proceed—

I do not ask for hints, and surmises,  
And circumstance, and proof: I know enough  
Of what I have done for you, and what you owe me,  
To have at least waited your payment rather  
Than paid myself, had I been eager of  
Your gold. I also know, that were I even  
The villain I am deemed, the service rendered  
So recently would not permit you to  
Pursue me to the death, except through shame,  
Such as would leave your scutcheon but a blank.  
But this is nothing: I demand of you  
Justice upon your unjust servants, and  
From your own lips a disavowal of  
All sanction of their insolence: thus much  
You owe to the unknown, who asks no more,  
And never thought to have asked so much.

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*Stral.* This tone  
May be of innocence.

*Gab.* 'Sdeath! who dare doubt it,  
Except such villains as ne'er had it?

*Stral.* You  
Are hot, sir.

*Gab.* Must I turn an icicle  
Before the breath of menials, and their master?<sup>i</sup>

*Stral.* Ulric! you know this man; I found him in  
Your company.

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*Gab.* We found *you* in the Oder;  
Would we had left you there!

*Stral.* I give you thanks, sir.

*Gab.* I've earned them; but might have earned more  
from others,  
Perchance, if I had left you to your fate.

*Stral.* Ulric! you know this man?

*Gab.* No more than you do  
If he avouches not my honour.

*Ulr.* I  
Can vouch your courage, and, as far as my  
Own brief connection led me, honour.

*Stral.* Then  
I'm satisfied.

*Gab. (ironically).* Right easily, methinks.  
What is the spell in his asseveration  
More than in mine? 250

*Stral.* I merely said that I  
Was satisfied—not that you are absolved.

*Gab.* Again! Am I accused or no?

*Stral.* Go to!  
You wax too insolent. If circumstance

And general suspicion be against you,  
Is the fault mine? Is't not enough that I  
Decline all question of your guilt or innocence?

*Gab.* My Lord, my Lord, this is mere cozenage,<sup>1</sup>  
A vile equivocation; you well know  
Your doubts are certainties to all around you— 260  
Your looks a voice—your frowns a sentence; you  
Are practising your power on me—because  
You have it; but beware! you know not whom  
You strive to tread on.

*Stral.* Threat'st thou?

*Gab.* Not so much  
As you accuse. You hint the basest injury,  
And I retort it with an open warning.

*Stral.* As you have said, 'tis true I owe you something,  
For which you seem disposed to pay yourself.

*Gab.* Not with your gold.

*Stral.* With bootless insolence.  
[To his Attendants and IDENSTEIN.  
You need not further to molest this man, 270  
But let him go his way. Ulric, good morrow!

[Exit STRALENHEIM, IDENSTEIN, and Attendants.

*Gab. (following).* I'll after him and—

*Ulr. (stopping him).* Not a step.

*Gab.* Who shall  
Oppose me?

*Ulr.* Your own reason, with a moment's  
Thought.

1. [Compare—

"Cozenage, mere cozenage."

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, act iv. sc. 5, line 58.

If further proof were needed, the repetition or echo of Shakespearian phrases, here and elsewhere in the play, would reveal Byron's handiwork.]

*Gab.* Must I bear this?

*Ulr.* Pshaw! we all must bear  
The arrogance of something higher than  
Ourselves—the highest cannot temper Satan,  
Nor the lowest his vicegerents upon earth.  
I've seen you brave the elements, and bear  
Things which had made this silkworm<sup>1</sup> cast his skin—  
And shrink you from a few sharp sneers and words? 280

*Gab.* Must I bear to be deemed a thief? If 'twere  
A bandit of the woods, I could have borne it—  
There's something daring in it:—but to steal  
The moneys of a slumbering man!—

*Ulr.* It seems, then,  
You are *not* guilty.

*Gab.* Do I hear aright?  
You too!

*Ulr.* I merely asked a simple question.

*Gab.* If the judge asked me, I would answer "No"—  
To you I answer *thus*. [*He draws.*]

*Ulr.* (*drawing*). With all my heart!

*Jos.* Without there! Ho! help! help!—Oh, God!  
here's murder! [*Exit JOSEPHINE, shrieking.*]

GABOR and ULRIC *fight*. GABOR is *disarmed just as*  
STRALENHEIM, JOSEPHINE, IDENSTEIN, *etc.*, *re-enter*.

*Jos.* Oh! glorious Heaven! He's safe!

*Stral.* (*to JOSEPHINE*). *Who's safe!*

*Jos.* *My—*

*Ulr.* (*interrupting her with a stern look, and turning*  
*afterwards to STRALENHEIM*). Both! 290  
Here's no great harm done.

*Stral.* What hath caused all this?

*Ulr.* You, Baron, I believe; but as the effect  
Is harmless, let it not disturb you.—Gabor!  
There is your sword; and when you bare it next,

1. [Compare *Marino Faliero*, act ii. sc. 2, line 115—

"These swoln silkworms masters."

Silkworm ("mal bigatto") is an Italianism. See *Poetical Works*, 1901,  
iv. 386, *note* 4.]

Let it not be against your *friends*.

[ULRIC *pronounces the last words slowly and emphatically in a low voice to GABOR.*

*Gab.* I thank you  
Less for my life than for your counsel.

*Stral.* These  
Brawls must end here.

*Gab. (taking his sword).* They *shall*. You've wronged me, Ulric,  
More with your unkind thoughts than sword : I would  
The last were in my bosom rather than  
The first in yours. I could have borne yon noble's 300  
Absurd insinuations—ignorance  
And dull suspicion are a part of his  
Entail will last him longer than his lands—  
But I may fit *him* yet :—you have vanquished me.  
I was the fool of passion to conceive  
That I could cope with you, whom I had seen  
Already proved by greater perils than  
Rest in this arm. We may meet by and by,  
However—but in friendship. [Exit GABOR.

*Stral.* I will brook  
No more ! This outrage following upon his insults, 310  
Perhaps his guilt, has cancelled all the little  
I owed him heretofore for the so-vaunted  
Aid which he added to your abler succour.  
Ulric, you are not hurt?—

*Ulr.* Not even by a scratch.

*Stral. (to IDENSTEIN).* Intendant ! take your measures  
to secure

Yon fellow : I revoke my former lenity.  
He shall be sent to Frankfort with an escort,  
The instant that the waters have abated.

*Iden.* Secure him ! He hath got his sword again—  
And seems to know the use on't ; 'tis his trade, 320  
Belike ;—*I'm* a civilian.

*Stral.* Fool ! are not  
Yon score of vassals dogging at your heels  
Enough to seize a dozen such ? Hence ! after him !

*Ulr.* Baron, I do beseech you !

*Stral.* I must be

Obeded. No words!

*Iden.* Well, if it must be so—  
March, vassals! I'm your leader, and will bring  
The rear up: a wise general never should  
Expose his precious life—on which all rests.  
I like that article of war.

[*Exit IDENSTEIN and Attendants.*]

*Stral.* Come hither,  
Ulric; what does that woman here? Oh! now 330  
I recognise her, 'tis the stranger's wife  
Whom they name "Werner."

*Ulr.* 'Tis his name.

*Stral.* Indeed!  
Is not your husband visible, fair dame?—

*Jos.* Who seeks him?

*Stral.* No one—for the present: but  
I fain would parley, Ulric, with yourself  
Alone.

*Ulr.* I will retire with you.

*Jos.* Not so:  
You are the latest stranger, and command  
All places here.

(*Aside to ULRIC, as she goes out.*) O Ulric! have a care—  
Remember what depends on a rash word!

*Ulr.* (*to JOSEPHINE.*) Fear not!—  
[*Exit JOSEPHINE.*]

*Stral.* Ulric, I think that I may trust you; 340  
You saved my life—and acts like these beget  
Unbounded confidence.

*Ulr.* Say on.

*Stral.* Mysterious  
And long-engendered circumstances (not  
To be now fully entered on) have made  
This man obnoxious—perhaps fatal to me.

*Ulr.* Who? Gabor, the Hungarian?

*Stral.* No—this "Werner"—  
With the false name and habit.

*Ulr.* How can this be?  
He is the poorest of the poor—and yellow  
Sickness sits cavered in his hollow eye:<sup>i</sup>

i. — and hollow  
*Sickness sits cavered in his yellow eye.*—[MS. M.]

The man is helpless.

*Stral.* He is—'tis no matter ;— 350  
But if he be the man I deem (and that  
He is so, all around us here—and much  
That is not here—confirm my apprehension)  
He must be made secure ere twelve hours further.

*Ulr.* And what have I to do with this ?

*Stral.* I have sent  
To Frankfort, to the Governor, my friend,  
(I have the authority to do so by  
An order of the house of Brandenburg),  
For a fit escort—but this curséd flood  
Bars all access, and may do for some hours. 360

*Ulr.* It is abating.

*Stral.* That is well.

*Ulr.* But how  
Am I concerned ?

*Stral.* As one who did so much  
For me, you cannot be indifferent to  
That which is of more import to me than  
The life you rescued.—Keep your eye on *him* !  
The man avoids me, knows that I now know him.—  
Watch him !—as you would watch the wild boar when  
He makes against you in the hunter's gap—  
Like him he must be speared.

*Ulr.* Why so ?

*Stral.* He stands  
Between me and a brave inheritance ! 370  
Oh ! could you see it ! But you shall.

*Ulr.* I hope so.

*Stral.* It is the richest of the rich Bohemia,  
Unscathed by scorching war. It lies so near  
The strongest city, Prague, that fire and sword  
Have skimmed it lightly : so that now, besides  
Its own exuberance, it bears double value  
Confronted with whole realms far and near  
Made deserts.

*Ulr.* You describe it faithfully.

*Stral.* Aye—could you see it, you would say so—but,  
As I have said, you shall.

*Ulr.* I accept the omen. 380

*Stral.* Then claim a recompense from it and me,  
Such as *both* may make worthy your acceptance  
And services to me and mine for ever.

*Ulr.* And this sole, sick, and miserable wretch—  
This way-worn stranger—stands between you and  
This Paradise?—(As Adam did between  
The devil and his)—[*Aside*].

*Stral.* He doth.

*Ulr.* Hath he no right?

*Stral.* Right! none. A disinherited prodigal,  
Who for these twenty years disgraced his lineage  
In all his acts—but chiefly by his marriage,  
And living amidst commerce-fetching burghers,  
And dabbling merchants, in a mart of Jews. 390

*Ulr.* He has a wife, then?

*Stral.* You'd be sorry to  
Call such your mother. You have seen the woman  
He *calls* his wife.

*Ulr.* Is she not so?

*Stral.* No more  
Than he's your father:—an Italian girl,  
The daughter of a banished man, who lives  
On love and poverty with this same Werner.

*Ulr.* They are childless, then?

*Stral.* There is or was a bastard,  
Whom the old man—the grandsire (as old age 400  
Is ever doting) took to warm his bosom,  
As it went chilly downward to the grave:  
But the imp stands not in my path—he has fled,  
No one knows whither; and if he had not,  
His claims alone were too contemptible  
To stand.—Why do you smile?

*Ulr.* At your vain fears:  
A poor man almost in his grasp—a child  
Of doubtful birth—can startle a grandee!

*Stral.* All's to be feared, where all is to be gained.

*Ulr.* True; and aught done to save or to obtain it.

*Stral.* You have harped the very string next to my  
heart.<sup>1</sup> 411

1. ["Thou hast harped my fear aright."]

*Macbeth*, act iv. sc. i, line 74.]



I may depend upon you ?

*Ulr.*

'Twere too late

To doubt it.

*Stral.*

Let no foolish pity shake  
Your bosom (for the appearance of the man  
Is pitiful)—he is a wretch, as likely  
To have robbed me as the fellow more suspected,  
Except that circumstance is less against him ;  
He being lodged far off, and in a chamber  
Without approach to mine ; and, to say truth,  
I think too well of blood allied to mine,  
To deem he would descend to such an act :  
Besides, he was a soldier, and a brave one  
Once—though too rash.

420

*Ulr.*

And they, my Lord, we know  
By our experience, never plunder till  
They knock the brains out first—which makes them  
heirs,  
Not thieves. The dead, who feel nought, can lose  
nothing,  
Nor e'er be robbed : their spoils are a bequest—  
No more.

*Stral.*

Go to ! you are a wag. But say  
I may be sure you'll keep an eye on this man,  
And let me know his slightest movement towards  
Concealment or escape.

430

*Ulr.*

You may be sure  
You yourself could not watch him more than I  
Will be his sentinel.

*Stral.*

By this you make me  
Yours, and for ever.

*Ulr.*

Such is my intention.

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the same Palace, from whence the secret Passage leads.*

*Enter WERNER and GABOR.*

*Gab.* Sir, I have told my tale : if it so please you  
To give me refuge for a few hours, well—  
If not, I'll try my fortune elsewhere.

*Wer.*

How

Can I, so wretched, give to Misery  
A shelter?—wanting such myself as much  
As e'er the hunted deer a covert——

*Gab.*

Or

The wounded lion his cool cave. Methinks  
You rather look like one would turn at bay,  
And rip the hunter's entrails.

*Wer.*

Ah !

*Gab.*

I care not

If it be so, being much disposed to do  
The same myself. But will you shelter me ?  
I am oppressed like you—and poor like you—  
Disgraced——

10

*Wer. (abruptly).* Who told you that I was disgraced ?

*Gab.* No one ; nor did I say *you* were so : with  
Your poverty my likeness ended ; but  
I said *I* was so—and would add, with truth,  
As undeservedly as *you*.

*Wer.*

Again !

As *I* ?

*Gab.* Or any other honest man.  
What the devil would you have ? You don't believe me  
Guilty of this base theft ?

*Wer.*

No, no—I cannot.

20

*Gab.* Why that 's my heart of honour ! yon young  
gallant—  
Your miserly Intendant and dense noble—  
All—all suspected me ; and why ? because  
I am the worst clothed, and least named amongst them ;

Although, were Momus' <sup>1</sup> lattice in your breasts,  
My soul might brook to open it more widely  
Than theirs: but thus it is—you poor and helpless—  
Both still more than myself.

*Wer.* How know you that?

*Gab.* You're right: I ask for shelter at the hand  
Which I call helpless; if you now deny it, 30  
I were well paid. But you, who seem to have proved  
The wholesome bitterness of life, know well,  
By sympathy, that all the outspread gold  
Of the New World the Spaniard boasts about  
Could never tempt the man who knows its worth,  
Weighed at its proper value in the balance,  
Save in such guise (and there I grant its power,  
Because I feel it,) as may leave no nightmare  
Upon his heart o' nights.

*Wer.* What do you mean?

*Gab.* Just what I say; I thought my speech was 40  
plain:  
You are no thief—nor I—and, as true men,  
Should aid each other.

*Wer.* It is a damned world, sir.

*Gab.* So is the nearest of the two next, as  
The priests say (and no doubt they should know best),  
Therefore I'll stick by this—as being loth  
To suffer martyrdom, at least with such  
An epitaph as larceny upon my tomb.  
It is but a night's lodging which I crave;  
To-morrow I will try the waters, as  
The dove did—trusting that they have abated. 50

*Wer.* Abated? Is there hope of that?

*Gab.* There was  
At noontide.

*Wer.* Then we may be safe.

*Gab.* Are you

1. ["Momus is the god of cruel mockery. He is said to have found fault with the man formed by Hephaestus, because a little door had not been left in his breast, so as to enable his fellows to look into his secret thoughts." (See Lucian's *Hermotimus*, cap. xx.) There was a proverb, τῷ Μόμῳ ἀπερκεῖν, *Momo satisfacere*; vide *Adagia Variorum*, 1643, p. 58. Byron describes Suwarrow as "Now Mars, now Momus" (*Don Juan*, Canto VII. stanza lv. line 7).]

In peril?

*Wer.* Poverty is ever so.

*Gab.* That I know by long practice. Will you not Promise to make mine less?

*Wer.* Your poverty?

*Gab.* No—you don't look a leech for that disorder; I meant my peril only: you've a roof, And I have none; I merely seek a covert.

*Wer.* Rightly; for how should such a wretch as I Have gold?

*Gab.* Scarce honestly, to say the truth on't, 60  
Although I almost wish you had the Baron's.

*Wer.* Dare you insinuate?

*Gab.* What?

*Wer.* Are you aware  
To whom you speak?

*Gab.* No; and I am not used  
Greatly to care. (*A noise heard without.*) But hark!  
they come!

*Wer.* Who come?

*Gab.* The Intendant and his man-hounds after me:  
I'd face them—but it were in vain to expect  
Justice at hands like theirs. Where shall I go?  
But show me any place. I do assure you,  
If there be faith in man, I am most guiltless:  
Think if it were your own case!

*Wer. (aside).* Oh, just God! 70  
Thy hell is not hereafter! Am I dust still?

*Gab.* I see you're moved; and it shows well in you:  
I may live to requite it.

*Wer.* Are you not  
A spy of Stralenheim's?

*Gab.* Not I! and if  
I were, what is there to espy in you?  
Although, I recollect, his frequent question  
About you and your spouse might lead to some  
Suspicion; but you best know—what—and why.  
I am his deadliest foe.

*Wer.* You?

*Gab.* After such  
A treatment for the service which in part

I rendered him, I am his enemy :  
If you are not his friend you will assist me.

*Wer.* I will.

*Gab.* But how?

*Wer.* (*showing the panel*). There is a secret spring :  
Remember, I discovered it by chance,  
And used it but for safety.

*Gab.* Open it,  
And I will use it for the same.

*Wer.* I found it,  
As I have said : it leads through winding walls,  
(So thick as to bear paths within their ribs,  
Yet lose no jot of strength or stateliness,)  
And hollow cells, and obscure niches, to 90  
I know not whither ; you must not advance :  
Give me your word.

*Gab.* It is unnecessary :  
How should I make my way in darkness through  
A Gothic labyrinth of unknown windings ?

*Wer.* Yes, but who knows to what place it may lead ?  
I know not—(mark you!)—but who knows it might  
not

Lead even into the chamber of your foe ?  
So strangely were contrived these galleries  
By our Teutonic fathers in old days,  
When man built less against the elements 100  
Than his next neighbour. You must not advance  
Beyond the two first windings ; if you do  
(Albeit I never passed them,) I'll not answer  
For what you may be led to.

*Gab.* But I will.  
A thousand thanks !

*Wer.* You'll find the spring more obvious  
On the other side ; and, when you would return,  
It yields to the least touch.

*Gab.* I'll in—farewell !

[*GABOR goes in by the secret panel.*]

*Wer.* (*solus*). What have I done ? Alas ! what *had*  
I done

Before to make this fearful ? Let it be  
Still some atonement that I save the man, 110

Whose sacrifice had saved perhaps my own—  
They come! to seek elsewhere what is before them!

*Enter IDENSTEIN and Others.*

*Iden.* Is he not here? He must have vanished then  
Through the dim Gothic glass by pious aid  
Of pictured saints upon the red and yellow  
Casements, through which the sunset streams like sunrise  
On long pearl-coloured beards and crimson crosses.  
And gilded crosiers, and crossed arms, and cowls,  
And helmets, and twisted armour, and long swords,  
All the fantastic furniture of windows  
Dim with brave knights and holy hermits, whose  
Likeness and fame alike rest in some panes  
Of crystal, which each rattling wind proclaims  
As frail as any other life or glory.  
He's gone, however.

120

*Wer.* Whom do you seek?

*Iden.* A villain.

*Wer.* Why need you come so far, then?

*Iden.* In the search

Of him who robbed the Baron.

*Wer.* Are you sure

You have divined the man?

*Iden.* As sure as you

Stand there: but where's he gone?

*Wer.* Who?

*Iden.* He we sought.

*Wer.* You see he is not here.

*Iden.* And yet we traced him 130

Up to this hall. Are you accomplices?

Or deal you in the black art?

*Wer.* I deal plainly,

To many men the blackest.

*Iden.* It may be

I have a question or two for yourself

Hereafter; but we must continue now

Our search for t'other.

*Wer.* You had best begin

Your inquisition now: I may not be

So patient always.

*Iden.* I should like to know,  
In good sooth, if you really are the man  
That Stralenheim 's in quest of.

*Wer.* Insolent ! 140  
Said you not that he was not here ?

*Iden.* Yes, one ;  
But there 's another whom he tracks more keenly,  
And soon, it may be, with authority  
Both paramount to his and mine. But come !  
Bustle, my boys ! we are at fault.

[*Exit IDENSTEIN and Attendants.*]

*Wer.* In what  
A maze hath my dim destiny involved me !  
And one base sin hath done me less ill than  
The leaving undone one far greater. Down,  
Thou busy devil, rising in my heart !  
Thou art too late ! I'll nought to do with blood. 150

*Enter ULRIC.*

*Ulr.* I sought you, father.

*Wer.* Is't not dangerous ?

*Ulr.* No ; Stralenheim is ignorant of all  
Or any of the ties between us : more—  
He sends me here a spy upon your actions,  
Deeming me wholly his.

*Wer.* I cannot think it :  
'Tis but a snare he winds about us both,  
To swoop the sire and son at once.

*Ulr.* I cannot  
Pause in each petty fear, and stumble at  
The doubts that rise like briars in our path,  
But must break through them, as an unarmed carle 160  
Would, though with naked limbs, were the wolf rustling  
In the same thicket where he hewed for bread.  
Nets are for thrushes, eagles are not caught so :  
We'll overfly or rend them.

*Wer.* Show me *how* ?

*Ulr.* Can you not guess ?

*Wer.* I cannot.

*Ulr.* That is strange.  
Came the thought ne'er into your mind *last night*?

*Wer.* I understand you not.

*Ulr.* Then we shall never  
More understand each other. But to change  
The topic——

*Wer.* You mean to *pursue* it, as  
'Tis of our safety.

*Ulr.* Right; I stand corrected. 170  
I see the subject now more clearly, and  
Our general situation in its bearings.  
The waters are abating; a few hours  
Will bring his summoned myrmidons from Frankfort,  
When you will be a prisoner, perhaps worse,  
And I an outcast, bastardised by practice  
Of this same Baron to make way for him.

*Wer.* And now your remedy! I thought to escape  
By means of this accurséd gold; but now  
I dare not use it, show it, scarce look on it. 180  
Methinks it wears upon its face my guilt  
For motto, not the mintage of the state;  
And, for the sovereign's head, my own begirt  
With hissing snakes, which curl around my temples,  
And cry to all beholders, Lo! a villain!

*Ulr.* You must not use it, at least now; but take  
This ring. [*He gives WERNER a jewel.*]

*Wer.* A gem! It was my father's!

*Ulr.* And  
As such is now your own. With this you must  
Bribe the Intendant for his old caleche  
And horses to pursue your route at sunrise, 190  
Together with my mother.

*Wer.* And leave you,  
So lately found, in peril too?

*Ulr.* Fear nothing!  
The only fear were if we fled together,  
For that would make our ties beyond all doubt.  
The waters only lie in flood between  
This burgh and Frankfort; so far 's in our favour.  
The route on to Bohemia, though encumbered,  
Is not impassable; and when you gain



A few hours' start, the difficulties will be  
The same to your pursuers. Once beyond 200  
The frontier, and you're safe.

*Wer.* My noble boy!

*Ulr.* Hush! hush! no transports: we'll indulge in them  
In Castle Siegendorf! Display no gold:  
Show Idenstein the gem (I know the man,  
And have looked through him): it will answer thus  
A double purpose. Stralenheim lost *gold*—  
*No* jewel: therefore it could *not* be his;  
And then the man who was possest of this  
Can hardly be suspected of abstracting  
The Baron's coin, when he could thus convert 210  
This ring to more than Stralenheim has lost  
By his last night's slumber. Be not over timid  
In your address, nor yet too arrogant,  
And Idenstein will serve you.

*Wer.* I will follow  
In all things your direction.

*Ulr.* I would have  
Spared you the trouble; but had I appeared  
To take an interest in you, and still more  
By dabbling with a jewel in your favour,  
All had been known at once.

*Wer.* My guardian angel!  
This overpays the past. But how wilt thou 220  
Fare in our absence?

*Ulr.* Stralenheim knows nothing  
Of me as aught of kindred with yourself.  
I will but wait a day or two with him  
To lull all doubts, and then rejoin my father.

*Wer.* To part no more!

*Ulr.* I know not that; but at  
The least we'll meet again once more.

*Wer.* My boy!  
My friend! my only child, and sole preserver!  
Oh, do not hate me!

*Ulr.* Hate my father!

*Wer.* Aye,  
My father hated me. Why not my son?

*Ulr.* Your father knew you not as I do.

*Wer.* Scorpions 230  
Are in thy words! Thou know me? in this guise  
Thou canst not know me, I am not myself;  
Yet (hate me not) I will be soon.

*Ulr.* I'll wait!  
In the mean time be sure that all a son  
Can do for parents shall be done for mine.

*Wer.* I see it, and I feel it; yet I feel  
Further—that you despise me.

*Ulr.* Wherefore should I?

*Wer.* Must I repeat my humiliation?

*Ulr.* No!  
I have fathomed it and you. But let us talk  
Of this no more. Or, if it must be ever, 240  
Not *now*. Your error has redoubled all  
The present difficulties of our house  
At secret war with that of Stralenheim:  
All we have now to think of is to baffle  
Him. I have shown *one* way.

*Wer.* The only one,  
And I embrace it, as I did my son,  
Who showed *himself* and father's *safety* in  
One day.

*Ulr.* You *shall* be safe; let that suffice.  
Would Stralenheim's appearance in Bohemia  
Disturb your right, or mine, if once we were 250  
Admitted to our lands?

*Wer.* Assuredly,  
Situate as we are now; although the first  
Possessor might, as usual, prove the strongest—  
Especially the next in blood.

*Ulr.* *Blood!* 'tis  
A word of many meanings; in the veins,  
And out of them, it is a different thing—  
And so it should be, when the same in blood  
(As it is called) are aliens to each other,  
Like Theban brethren:<sup>1</sup> when a part is bad,  
A few spilt ounces purify the rest. 260

1. [For the "Theban brethren," Eteocles and Polynices, see the *Septem c. Thebas* of Æschylus. Byron had read and liked the "Seven before Thebes."—*Letters*, 1900, iv. 174.]

*Wer.* I do not apprehend you.

*Ulr.* That may be—  
And should, perhaps—and yet—but get ye ready;  
You and my mother must away to-night.  
Here comes the Intendant: sound him with the gem;  
'Twill sink into his venal soul like lead  
Into the deep, and bring up slime and mud,  
And ooze, too, from the bottom, as the lead doth  
With its greased understratum;<sup>1</sup> but no less  
Will serve to warn our vessels through these shoals.  
The freight is rich, so heave the line in time! 270  
Farewell! I scarce have time, but yet your *hand*,  
My father!—

*Wer.* Let me embrace thee!

*Ulr.* We may be  
Observed: subdue your nature to the hour!  
Keep off from me as from your foe!

*Wer.* Accursed  
Be he who is the stifling cause which smothers  
The best and sweetest feeling of our hearts;  
At such an hour too!

*Ulr.* Yes, curse—it will ease you!  
Here is the Intendant.

*Enter IDENSTEIN.*

Master Idenstein,  
How fare you in your purpose? Have you caught  
The rogue?

*Iden.* No, faith!

*Ulr.* Well, there are plenty more: 280  
You may have better luck another chase.  
Where is the Baron?

*Iden.* Gone back to his chamber:  
And now I think on't, asking after you  
With nobly-born impatience.

*Ulr.* Your great men

1. [A cavity at the lower end of the lead attached to a sounding-line is partially filled with an *arming* (tallow), to which the bottom, especially if it be sand, shells, or fine gravel, adheres.—Knights's *American Mechanical Dictionary*, 1877, art. "Sounding-Apparatus."] ]

Must be answered on the instant, as the bound  
Of the stung steed replies unto the spur :  
'Tis well they have horses, too ; for if they had not,  
I fear that men must draw their chariots, as  
They say kings did Sesostris.<sup>1</sup>

*Iden.* Who was he ?

*Ulr.* An old Bohemian—an imperial gipsy. 290

*Iden.* A gipsy or Bohemian, 'tis the same,  
For they pass by both names. And was he one ?

*Ulr.* I've heard so ; but I must take leave. Intendant,  
Your servant !—Werner (*to WERNER slightly*), if that be  
your name,

Yours. [*Exit ULRIC.*]

*Iden.* A well-spoken, pretty-faced young man !  
And prettily behaved ! He knows his station,  
You see, sir : how he gave to each his due  
Precedence !

*Wer.* I perceived it, and applaud  
His just discernment and your own.

*Iden.* That 's well—  
That 's very well. You also know your place, too ; 300  
And yet I don't know that *I* know your place.

*Wer.* (*showing the ring*). Would this assist your  
knowledge ?

*Iden.* How !—What !—Eh !  
A jewel !

*Wer.* 'Tis your own on one condition.

*Iden.* Mine !—Name it !

*Wer.* That hereafter you permit me  
At thrice its value to redeem it : 'tis  
A family ring.

*Iden.* A family !—*yours* !—a gem !  
I'm breathless !

*Wer.* You must also furnish me,  
An hour ere daybreak, with all means to quit  
This place.

*Iden.* But is it real ? Let me look on it :  
*Diamond*, by all that 's glorious !

1. [Compare *The Age of Bronze*, line 45, for the story of Sesostris being drawn by kings. (See Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. Hist.*, lib. i. p. 37, C., ed. 1604, p. 53.)]

*Wer.* Come, I'll trust you : 310  
You have guessed, no doubt, that I was born above  
My present seeming.

*Iden.* I can't say I did,  
Though this looks like it : this is the true breeding  
Of gentle blood !

*Wer.* I have important reasons  
For wishing to continue privily  
My journey hence.

*Iden.* So then *you are* the man  
Whom Stralenheim 's in quest of ?

*Wer.* I am not ;  
But being taken for him might conduct  
So much embarrassment to me just now,  
And to the Baron's self hereafter—'tis 320  
To spare both that I would avoid all bustle.

*Iden.* Be you the man or no, 'tis not my business ;  
Besides, I never could obtain the half  
From this proud, niggardly noble, who would raise  
The country for some missing bits of coin,  
And never offer a precise reward—<sup>i</sup>  
But *this* !—another look !

*Wer.* Gaze on it freely ;  
At day-dawn it is yours.

*Iden.* Oh, thou sweet sparkler !  
Thou more than stone of the philosopher !  
Thou touch-stone of Philosophy herself ! 330  
Thou bright eye of the Mine ! thou loadstar of  
The soul ! the true magnetic Pole to which  
All hearts point duly north, like trembling needles !  
Thou flaming Spirit of the Earth ! which, sitting  
High on the Monarch's Diadem, attractest  
More worship than the majesty who sweats  
Beneath the crown which makes his head ache, like  
Millions of hearts which bleed to lend it lustre !  
Shalt thou be mine ? I am, methinks, already  
A little king, a lucky alchymist !— 340  
A wise magician, who has bound the devil  
Without the forfeit of his soul. But come,  
Werner, or what else ?

<sup>i</sup> *And never offered aught as a reward.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

*Wer.* Call me Werner still ;  
You may yet know me by a loftier title.

*Iden.* I do believe in thee ! thou art the spirit  
Of whom I long have dreamed in a low garb.—  
But come, I'll serve thee ; thou shalt be as free  
As air, despite the waters ; let us hence :  
I'll show thee I am honest—(oh, thou jewel !)  
Thou shalt be furnished, Werner, with such means 350  
Of flight, that if thou wert a snail, not birds <sup>i</sup>  
Should overtake thee.—Let me gaze again !  
I have a foster-brother in the mart  
Of Hamburg skilled in precious stones. How many  
Carats may it weigh ?—Come, Werner, I will wing thee.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—STRALENHEIM'S Chamber.

STRALENHEIM and FRITZ.

*Fritz.* All 's ready, my good Lord !

*Stral.* I am not sleepy,  
And yet I must to bed : I fain would say  
To rest, but something heavy on my spirit,  
Too dull for wakefulness, too quick for slumber,  
Sits on me as a cloud along the sky,  
Which will not let the sunbeams through, nor yet  
Descend in rain and end, but spreads itself  
'Twixt earth and heaven, like envy between man  
And man, an everlasting mist :—I will  
Unto my pillow.

*Fritz.* May you rest there well 10

*Stral.* I feel, and fear, I shall.

*Fritz.* And wherefore fear ?

*Stral.* I know not why, and therefore do fear more,  
Because an undescribable—but 'tis  
All folly. Were the locks as I desired  
Changed, to-day, of this chamber ? for last night's  
Adventure makes it needful.

*Fritz.* Certainly,  
According to your order, and beneath

i. — that if thou wert a snail, none else.—[*MS. M.*]

The inspection of myself and the young Saxon  
Who saved your life. I think they call him "Ulric."

*Stral.* You *think*! you supercilious slave! what right  
Have you to *tax* your memory, which should be 21  
Quick, proud, and happy to retain the *name*  
Of him who saved your master, as a litany  
Whose daily repetition marks your duty.—  
Get hence; "*You think*," indeed! you, who stood still  
Howling and dripping on the bank, whilst I  
Lay dying, and the stranger dashed aside  
The roaring torrent, and restored me to  
Thank him—and despise you. "*You think*!" and scarce  
Can recollect his name! I will not waste 30  
More words on you. Call me betimes.

*Fritz.* Good night!  
I trust to-morrow will restore your Lordship  
To renovated strength and temper. [*The scene closes.*]

### SCENE III.—*The secret Passage.*

*Gab. (solus).* Four—  
Five—six hours have I counted, like the guard  
Of outposts, on the never-merry clock,  
That hollow tongue<sup>1</sup> of time, which, even when  
It sounds for joy, takes something from enjoyment  
With every clang. 'Tis a perpetual knell,  
Though for a marriage-feast it rings: each stroke  
Peals for a hope the less; the funeral note  
Of Love deep-buried, without resurrection,  
In the grave of Possession; while the knoll<sup>2</sup> 10  
Of long-lived parents finds a jovial echo  
To triple time in the son's ear.

I'm cold—  
I'm dark;—I've blown my fingers—numbered o'er  
And o'er my steps—and knocked my head against  
Some fifty buttresses—and roused the rats

1. [Compare—

"The iron tongue of midnight."  
*Midsummer Night's Dream*, act v. sc. 1, line 352.]

2. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza xcvi. line 5, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 275, note 1.]

And bats in general insurrection, till  
Their curséd pattering feet and whirling wings  
Leave me scarce hearing for another sound.  
A light ! It is at distance (if I can  
Measure in darkness distance) : but it blinks 20  
As through a crevice or a key-hole, in  
The inhibited direction : I must on,  
Nevertheless, from curiosity.  
A distant lamp-light is an incident  
In such a den as this. Pray Heaven it lead me  
To nothing that may tempt me ! Else—Heaven aid me  
To obtain or to escape it ! Shining still !  
Were it the star of Lucifer himself,  
Or he himself girt with its beams, I could  
Contain no longer. Softly : mighty well ! 30  
That corner 's turned—so—ah ! no ;—right ! it draws  
Nearer. Here is a darksome angle—so,  
That 's weathered.—Let me pause.—Suppose it leads  
Into some greater danger than that which  
I have escaped—no matter, 'tis a new one ;  
And novel perils, like fresh mistresses,  
Wear more magnetic aspects :—I will on,  
And be it where it may—I have my dagger  
Which may protect me at a pinch.—Burn still,  
Thou little light ! Thou art my *ignis fatuus* ! 40  
My stationary Will-o'-the-wisp !<sup>1</sup>—So ! so !  
He hears my invocation, and fails not. [*The scene closes.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Garden.**Enter* WERNER.

*Wer.* I could not sleep—and now the hour's at hand !  
All's ready. Idenstein has kept his word ;  
And stationed in the outskirts of the town,  
Upon the forest's edge, the vehicle  
Awaits us. Now the dwindling stars begin  
To pale in heaven ; and for the last time I

1. [Compare—

“ With your leave, I will call a will-o'-the-wisp.”

Goethe's *Faust*.]



Look on these horrible walls. Oh! never, never  
 Shall I forget them. Here I came most poor,  
 But not dishonoured: and I leave them with  
 A stain,—if not upon my name, yet in  
 My heart!—a never-dying canker-worm, 10  
 Which all the coming splendour of the lands,  
 And rights, and sovereignty of Siegendorf  
 Can scarcely lull a moment. I must find  
 Some means of restitution, which would ease  
 My soul in part: but how, without discovery?—  
 It must be done, however; and I'll pause  
 Upon the method the first hour of safety.  
 The madness of my misery led to this  
 Base infamy; repentance must retrieve it: 20  
 I will have nought of Stralenheim's upon  
 My spirit, though he would grasp all of mine;  
 Lands, freedom, life,—and yet he sleeps as soundly  
 Perhaps, as infancy,<sup>1</sup> with gorgeous curtains  
 Spread for his canopy, o'er silken pillows,  
 Such as when—Hark! what noise is that? Again!  
 The branches shake; and some loose stones have fallen  
 From yonder terrace.

[ULRIC leaps down from the terrace.

Ulric! ever welcome!

Thrice welcome now! this filial——

Ulr.

Stop! before

We approach, tell me——

Wer.

Why look you so?

Ulr.

Do I 30

Behold my father, or——

Wer.

What?

Ulr.

An assassin?

Wer. Insane or insolent!

Ulr.

Reply, sir, as

You prize your life, or mine!

Wer.

To what must I

Answer?

Ulr. Are you or are you not the assassin

1. [Compare—

“Sleep she as sound as careless infancy.”

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, act v. sc. 5, line 50.]

Of Stralenheim?

*Wer.* I never was as yet  
The murderer of any man. What mean you?

*Ulr.* Did not you *this* night (as the night before)  
Retrace the secret passage? Did you not  
*Again* revisit Stralenheim's chamber? and——

[ULRIC *pauses*.

*Wer.* Proceed.

*Ulr.* Died he not by your hand?

*Wer.* Great God! 40

*Ulr.* You are innocent, then! my father's innocent!  
Embrace me! Yes,—your tone—your look—yes, yes,—  
Yet say so.

*Wer.* If I e'er, in heart or mind,  
Conceived deliberately such a thought,  
But rather strove to trample back to hell  
Such thoughts—if e'er they glared a moment through  
The irritation of my oppressed spirit—  
May Heaven be shut for ever from my hopes,  
As from mine eyes!

*Ulr.* But Stralenheim is dead.

*Wer.* 'Tis horrible! 'tis hideous, as 'tis hateful!— 50  
But what have I to do with this?

*Ulr.* No bolt  
Is forced; no violence can be detected,  
Save on his body. Part of his own household  
Have been alarmed; but as the Intendant is  
Absent, I took upon myself the care  
Of mustering the police. His chamber has,  
Past doubt, been entered secretly. Excuse me,  
If nature——

*Wer.* Oh, my boy! what unknown woes  
Of dark fatality, like clouds, are gathering  
Above our house!

*Ulr.* My father! I acquit you! 60  
But will the world do so? will even the judge,  
If—but you must away this instant.

*Wer.* No!  
I'll face it. Who shall dare suspect me?

*Ulr.* Yet  
You had *no* guests—*no* visitors—no life

Breathing around you, save my mother's?

*Wer.*

Ah!

The Hungarian?

*Ulr.*

He is gone! he disappeared

Ere sunset.

*Wer.*

No; I hid him in that very

Concealed and fatal gallery.

*Ulr.*

*There* I'll find him.

[*ULRIC is going.*]

*Wer.* It is too late: he had left the palace ere

I quitted it. I found the secret panel

70

Open, and the doors which lead from that hall

Which masks it: I but thought he had snatched the silent

And favourable moment to escape

The myrmidons of Idenstein, who were

Dogging him yester-even.

*Ulr.*

You reclosed

The panel?

*Wer.*

Yes; and not without reproach

(And inner trembling for the avoided peril)

At his dull heedlessness, in leaving thus

His shelterer's asylum to the risk

Of a discovery.

*Ulr.*

You are sure you closed it?

80

*Wer.* Certain.

*Ulr.*

That 's well; but had been better, if

You ne'er had turned it to a den for——

[*He pauses.*]

*Wer.*

Thieves!

Thou wouldst say: I must bear it, and deserve it;

But not——

*Ulr.*

No, father; do not speak of this:

This is no hour to think of petty crimes,

But to prevent the consequence of great ones.

Why would you shelter this man?

*Wer.*

Could I shun it?

A man pursued by my chief foe; disgraced

For my own crime: a victim to *my* safety,

Imploring a few hours' concealment from

90

The very wretch who was the cause he needed

Such refuge. Had he been a wolf, I could not

Have in such circumstances thrust him forth.

*Ulr.* And like the wolf he hath repaid you. But  
It is too late to ponder thus :—you must  
Set out ere dawn. I will remain here to  
Trace the murderer, if 'tis possible.

*Wer.* But this my sudden flight will give the Moloch  
Suspicion : two new victims in the lieu  
Of one, if I remain. The fled Hungarian, 100  
Who seems the culprit, and——

*Ulr.* Who seems? Who else  
Can be so?

*Wer.* Not I, though just now you doubted—  
You, my son!—doubted——

*Ulr.* And do you doubt of him  
The fugitive?

*Wer.* Boy! since I fell into  
The abyss of crime (though not of *such* crime), I,  
Having seen the innocent oppressed for me,  
May doubt even of the guilty's guilt. Your heart  
Is free, and quick with virtuous wrath to accuse  
Appearances; and views a criminal  
In Innocence's shadow, it may be, 110  
Because 'tis dusky.

*Ulr.* And if I do so,  
What will mankind, who know you not, or knew  
But to oppress? You must not stand the hazard.  
Away!—I'll make all easy. Idenstein  
Will for his own sake and his jewel's hold  
His peace—he also is a partner in  
Your flight—moreover——

*Wer.* Fly! and leave my name  
Linked with the Hungarian's, or, preferred as poorest,  
To bear the brand of bloodshed?

*Ulr.* Pshaw! leave any thing  
Except our fathers' sovereignty and castles, 120  
For which you have so long panted, and in vain!  
What name? You have *no name*, since that you bear  
Is feigned.

*Wer.* Most true: but still I would not have it  
Engraved in crimson in men's memories,  
Though in this most obscure abode of men——  
Besides, the search——

*Ulr.* I will provide against  
Aught that can touch you. No one knows you here  
As heir of Siegendorf: if Idenstein  
Suspects, 'tis *but suspicion*, and he is  
A fool: his folly shall have such employment, 130  
Too, that the unknown Werner shall give way  
To nearer thoughts of self. The laws (if e'er  
Laws reached this village) are all in abeyance  
With the late general war of thirty years,  
Or crushed, or rising slowly from the dust,  
To which the march of armies trampled them.  
Stralenheim, although noble, is unheeded  
*Here*, save as *such*—without lands, influence,  
Save what hath perished with him. Few prolong  
A week beyond their funeral rites their sway 140  
O'er men, unless by relatives, whose interest  
Is roused: such is not here the case; he died  
Alone, unknown,—a solitary grave,  
Obscure as his deserts, without a scutcheon,  
Is all he'll have, or wants. If I discover  
The assassin, 'twill be well—if not, believe me,  
None else; though all the full-fed train of menials  
May howl above his ashes (as they did  
Around him in his danger on the Oder),  
Will no more stir a finger *now* than *then*. 150  
Hence! hence! I must not hear your answer.—Look!  
The stars are almost faded, and the grey  
Begins to grizzle the black hair of night.  
You shall not answer:—Pardon me that I  
Am peremptory: 'tis your son that speaks,  
Your long-lost, late-found son.—Let's call my mother!  
Softly and swiftly step, and leave the rest  
To me: I'll answer for the event as far  
As regards *you*, and that is the chief point,  
As my first duty, which shall be observed. 160  
We'll meet in Castle Siegendorf—once more  
Our banners shall be glorious! Think of that  
Alone, and leave all other thoughts to me,  
Whose youth may better battle with them—Hence!  
And may your age be happy!—I will kiss  
My mother once more, then Heaven's speed be with you!

*Wer.* This counsel 's safe—but is it honourable?

*Ulr.* To save a father is a child's chief honour.

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Gothic Hall in the Castle of Siegendorf, near Prague.*

*Enter ERIC and HENRICK, Retainers of the Count.*

*Eric.* So, better times are come at last; to these  
Old walls new masters and high wassail—both  
A long desideratum.

*Hen.* Yes, for *masters*,  
It might be unto those who long for novelty,  
Though made by a new grave: but, as for wassail,  
Methinks the old Count Siegendorf maintained  
His feudal hospitality as high  
As e'er another Prince of the empire.

*Eric.* Why  
For the mere cup and trencher, we no doubt  
Fared passing well; but as for merriment  
And sport, without which salt and sauces season  
The cheer but scantily, our sizings were  
Even of the narrowest.

*Hen.* The old count loved not  
The roar of revel; are you sure that *this* does?

*Eric.* As yet he hath been courteous as he 's bounteous,  
And we all love him.

*Hen.* His reign is as yet  
Hardly a year o'erpast its honeymoon,  
And the first year of sovereigns is bridal:  
Anon, we shall perceive his real sway  
And moods of mind.

*Eric.* Pray Heaven he keep the present! 20  
Then his brave son, Count Ulrice—there 's a knight!  
Pity the wars are o'er!

*Hen.* Why so?

*Eric.* Look on him!

And answer that yourself.

*Hen.* He's very youthful,  
And strong and beautiful as a young tiger.

*Eric.* That's not a faithful vassal's likeness.

*Hen.* But  
Perhaps a true one.

*Eric.* Pity, as I said,  
The wars are over: in the hall, who like  
Count Ulric for a well-supported pride,  
Which awes, but yet offends not? in the field,  
Who like him with his spear in hand, when gnashing 30  
His tusks, and ripping up, from right to left,  
The howling hounds, the boar makes for the thicket?  
Who backs a horse, or bears a hawk, or wears  
A sword like him? Whose plume nods knightlier?

*Hen.* No one's, I grant you. Do not fear, if war  
Be long in coming, he is of that kind  
Will make it for himself, if he hath not  
Already done as much.

*Eric.* What do you mean?

*Hen.* You can't deny his train of followers  
(But few our native fellow-vassals born 40  
On the domain) are such a sort of knaves  
As——

[*Pauses.*]

*Eric.* What?

*Hen.* The war (you love so much) leaves living.  
Like other parents, she spoils her worst children.

*Eric.* Nonsense! they are all brave iron-visaged  
fellows,  
Such as old Tilly loved.

*Hen.* And who loved Tilly?  
Ask that at Magdebourg<sup>1</sup>—or, for that matter,  
Wallenstein either;—they are gone to——

*Eric.* Rest!  
But what beyond 'tis not ours to pronounce.

1. [At the siege of Magdebourg, May 19, 1631, "soldiers and citizens, with their wives, boys and girls, old and young, were all mercilessly butchered." "The city was set fire to at more than twelve points, and, except the cathedral and about fifty houses, sank into soot and ashes. It was not Tilly and his men, but Magdebourg's own people, who kindled the city to a conflagration."—*History of the Thirty Years' War*, by Anton Gindeley, 1885, ii. 65, 66.]

*Hen.* I wish they had left us something of their rest :  
The country (nominally now at peace) 50  
Is over-run with—God knows who : they fly  
By night, and disappear with sunrise ; but  
Leave us no less desolation, nay, even more,  
Than the most open warfare.

*Eric.* But Count Ulric—  
What has all this to do with him ?

*Hen.* With him !  
He—might prevent it. As you say he 's fond  
Of war, why makes he it not on those marauders ?

*Eric.* You'd better ask himself.

*Hen.* I would as soon  
Ask the lion why he laps not milk.

*Eric.* And here he comes !

*Hen.* The devil ! you'll hold your tongue ? 60

*Eric.* Why do you turn so pale ?

*Hen.* 'Tis nothing—but  
Be silent.

*Eric.* I will, upon what you have said.

*Hen.* I assure you I meant nothing,—a mere sport  
Of words, no more ; besides, had it been otherwise,  
He is to espouse the gentle Baroness  
Ida of Stralenheim, the late Baron's heiress ;  
And she, no doubt, will soften whatsoever  
Of fierceness the late long intestine wars  
Have given all natures, and most unto those  
Who were born in them, and bred up upon 70  
The knees of Homicide ; sprinkled, as it were,  
With blood even at their baptism. Prithee, peace  
On all that I have said !

*Enter ULRIC and RODOLPH.*

Good morrow, count.

*Ulr.* Good morrow, worthy Henrick. Eric, is  
All ready for the chase ?

*Eric.* The dogs are ordered  
Down to the forest, and the vassals out  
To beat the bushes, and the day looks promising.  
Shall I call forth your Excellency's suite ?



What courser will you please to mount?

*Ulr.* The dun,  
Walstein.

*Eric.* I fear he scarcely has recovered 80  
The toils of Monday: 'twas a noble chase:  
You speared *four* with your own hand.

*Ulr.* True, good Eric;  
I had forgotten—let it be the grey, then,  
Old Ziska: he has not been out this fortnight.

*Eric.* He shall be straight caparisoned. How many  
Of your immediate retainers shall  
Escort you?

*Ulr.* I leave that to Weilburgh, our  
Master of the horse. [Exit ERIC.]

Rodolph!

*Rod.* My Lord!  
*Ulr.* The news  
Is awkward from the—— [RODOLPH *points to* HENRICK.  
How now, Henrick? why

Loiter you here?

*Hen.* For your commands, my Lord. 90

*Ulr.* Go to my father, and present my duty,  
And learn if he would aught with me before  
I mount. [Exit HENRICK.]

Rodolph, our friends have had a check  
Upon the frontiers of Franconia,<sup>1</sup> and  
'Tis rumoured that the column sent against them  
Is to be strengthened. I must join them soon.

*Rod.* Best wait for further and more sure advices.

*Ulr.* I mean it—and indeed it could not well  
Have fallen out at a time more opposite  
To all my plans.

*Rod.* It will be difficult 100  
To excuse your absence to the Count your father.

*Ulr.* Yes, but the unsettled state of our domain  
In high Silesia will permit and cover  
My journey. In the mean time, when we are  
Engaged in the chase, draw off the eighty men  
Whom Wolffe leads—keep the forests on your route:

1. [In Miss Lee's *Kruitznor*, Conrad meets his death in a skirmish on the frontiers of Franconia.]

You know it well?

*Rod.* As well as on that night

When we——

*Ulr.* We will not speak of that until  
We can repeat the same with like success :  
And when you have joined, give Rosenberg this letter. 110  
[Gives a letter.

Add further, that I have sent this slight addition  
To our force with you and Wolffe, as herald of  
My coming, though I could but spare them ill  
At this time, as my father loves to keep  
Full numbers of retainers round the castle,  
Until this marriage, and its feasts and fooleries,  
Are rung out with its peal of nuptial nonsense.

*Rod.* I thought you loved the lady Ida?

*Ulr.* Why,

I do so—but it follows not from that  
I would bind in my youth and glorious years, 120  
So brief and burning, with a lady's zone,  
Although 'twere that of Venus :—but I love her,  
As woman should be loved—fairly and solely.

*Rod.* And constantly?

*Ulr.* I think so ; for I love  
Nought else.—But I have not the time to pause  
Upon these gewgaws of the heart. Great things  
We have to do ere long. Speed ! speed ! good Rodolph !

*Rod.* On my return, however, I shall find  
The Baroness Ida lost in Countess Siegendorf?

*Ulr.* Perhaps : my father wishes it, and, sooth, 130  
'Tis no bad policy : this union with  
The last bud of the rival branch at once  
Unites the future and destroys the past.

*Rod.* Adieu.

*Ulr.* Yet hold—we had better keep together  
Until the chase begins ; then draw thou off,  
And do as I have said.

*Rod.* I will. But to  
Return—'twas a most kind act in the count  
Your father to send up to Konigsberg  
For this fair orphan of the Baron, and  
To hail her as his daughter.

*Ulr.* Wondrous kind ! 140  
Especially as little kindness till  
Then grew between them.

*Rod.* The late Baron died  
Of a fever, did he not ?

*Ulr.* How should I know ?

*Rod.* I have heard it whispered there was something  
strange  
About his death—and even the place of it  
Is scarcely known.

*Ulr.* Some obscure village on  
The Saxon or Silesian frontier.

*Rod.* He  
Has left no testament—no farewell words ?

*Ulr.* I am neither confessor nor notary,  
So cannot say.

*Rod.* Ah ! here 's the lady Ida. 150

*Enter* IDA STRALENHEIM.

*Ulr.* You are early, my sweet cousin !

*Ida.* Not too early,  
Dear Ulric, if I do not interrupt you.  
Why do you call me "*Cousin* ?"

*Ulr. (smiling).* Are we not so ?

*Ida.* Yes, but I do not like the name ; methinks  
It sounds so cold, as if you thought upon  
Our pedigree, and only weighed our blood.

*I lr. (startling).* Blood !

*Ida.* Why does yours start from your cheeks ?

*Ulr.* Aye ! doth it ?

*Ida.* It doth—but no ! it rushes like a torrent  
Even to your brow again.

*Ulr. (recovering himself).* And if it fled,  
It only was because your presence sent it 160  
Back to my heart, which beats for you, sweet Cousin !

*Ida.* "Cousin" again.

*Ulr.* Nay, then, I'll call you sister.

*Ida.* I like that name still worse.—Would we had ne'er  
Been aught of kindred !

*Ulr. (gloomily).* Would we never had !

*Ida.* Oh, heavens! and can *you wish that?*

*Ulr.*

Dearest *Ida!*

Did I not echo your own wish?

*Ida.*

Yes, *Ulric,*

But then I wished it not with such a glance,  
And scarce knew what I said; but let me be  
Sister, or cousin, what you will, so that  
I still to you am something.

*Ulr.*

You shall be

170

All—all——

*Ida.*

And you to *me* are so already;

But I can wait.

*Ulr.*

Dear *Ida!*

*Ida.*

Call me *Ida,*

*Your* *Ida*, for I would be yours, none else's—

Indeed I have none else left, since my poor father—

[*She pauses.*]

*Ulr.* You have *mine*—you have *me.*

*Ida.*

Dear *Ulric*, how I wish

My father could but view my happiness,  
Which wants but this!

*Ulr.*

Indeed!

*Ida.*

You would have loved him,

He you; for the brave ever love each other:

His manner was a little cold, his spirit

Proud (as is birth's prerogative); but under

180

This grave exterior——Would you had known each other!

Had such as you been near him on his journey,

He had not died without a friend to soothe

His last and lonely moments.

*Ulr.*

Who says *that?*

*Ida.* What?

*Ulr.*

That he *died alone.*

*Ida.*

The general rumour,

And disappearance of his servants, who

Have ne'er returned: that fever was most deadly

Which swept them all away.

*Ulr.*

If they were near him,

He could not die neglected or alone.

*Ida.* Alas! what is a menial to a death-bed,

190

When the dim eye rolls vainly round for what

It loves?—They say he died of a fever.

*Ulr.*

*Say!*

It was so.

*Ida.* I sometimes dream otherwise.

*Ulr.* All dreams are false.

*Ida.*

And yet I see him as

I see you.

*Ulr.* *Where?*

*Ida.*

In sleep—I see him lie

Pale, bleeding, and a man with a raised knife

Beside him.

*Ulr.* But you do not see his face?

*Ida* (*looking at him*). No! Oh, my God! do you?

*Ulr.*

Why do you ask?

*Ida.* Because you look as if you saw a murderer!

*Ulr.* (*agitatedly*). *Ida*, this is mere childishness; your weakness

200

Infects me, to my shame: but as all feelings

Of yours are common to me, it affects me.

Prithee, sweet child, change——

*Ida.*

Child, indeed! I have

Full fifteen summers!

[*A bugle sounds*]

*Rod.*

Hark, my Lord, the bugle!

*Ida* (*peevishly to RODOLPH*). Why need you tell him that? Can he not hear it

Without your echo?

*Rod.*

Pardon me, fair Baroness!

*Ida.* I will not pardon you, unless you earn it

By aiding me in my dissuasion of

Count Ulric from the chase to-day.

*Rod.*

You will not,

Lady, need aid of mine.

*Ulr.*

I must not now

210

Forgo it.

*Ida.*

But you shall

*Ulr.*

*Shall!*

*Ida.*

Yes, or be

No true knight.—Come, dear Ulric! yield to me

In this, for this one day: the day looks heavy,

And you are turned so pale and ill.

*Ulr.*

You jest.

*Ida.* Indeed I do not :—ask of Rodolph.

*Rod.*

Truly,

My Lord, within this quarter of an hour  
You have changed more than e'er I saw you change  
In years.

*Ulr.* 'Tis nothing ; but if 'twere, the air  
Would soon restore me. I'm the true cameleon,  
And live but on the atmosphere ;<sup>1</sup> your feasts 220  
In castle halls, and social banquets, nurse not  
My spirit—I'm a forester and breather  
Of the steep mountain-tops,<sup>2</sup> where I love all  
The eagle loves.

*Ida.* Except his prey, I hope.

*Ulr.* Sweet Ida, wish me a fair chase, and I  
Will bring you six boars' heads for trophies home.

*Ida.* And will you not stay, then? You shall not go !  
Come ! I will sing to you.

*Ulr.* Ida, you scarcely  
Will make a soldier's wife.

*Ida.* I do not wish  
To be so ; for I trust these wars are over, 230  
And you will live in peace on your domains.

*Enter WERNER as COUNT SIEGENDORF.*

*Ulr.* My father, I salute you, and it grieves me  
With such brief greeting.—You have heard our bugle ;  
The vassals wait.

*Sieg.* So let them.—You forget  
To-morrow is the appointed festival  
In Prague<sup>3</sup> for peace restored. You are apt to follow  
The chase with such an ardour as will scarce  
Permit you to return to-day, or if  
Returned, too much fatigued to join to-morrow

1. [Compare "Excellent, i' faith ; of the chameleon's dish : I eat the  
air" (*Hamlet*, act iii. sc. 2, lines 88, 89).]

2. [Compare—

"Had his free breathing been denied  
The range of the steep mountain's side."

*Prisoner of Chillon*, lines 142, 143.]

3. [The Treaty of Prague was signed May 30, 1635.]

The nobles in our marshalled ranks.

*Ulr.* You, Count, 240  
Will well supply the place of both—I am not  
A lover of these pageantries.

*Sieg.* No, Ulric;  
It were not well that you alone of all  
Our young nobility——

*Ida.* And far the noblest  
In aspect and demeanour.

*Sieg. (to IDA).* True, dear child,  
Though somewhat frankly said for a fair damsel.—  
But, Ulric, recollect too our position,  
So lately reinstated in our honours.  
Believe me, 'twould be marked in any house,  
But most in *ours*, that ONE should be found wanting 250  
At such a time and place. Besides, the Heaven  
Which gave us back our own, in the same moment  
It spread its peace o'er all, hath double claims  
On us for thanksgiving: first, for our country;  
And next, that we are here to share its blessings.

*Ulr. (aside).* Devout, too! Well, sir, I obey at once.  
(*Then aloud to a servant.*) Ludwig, dismiss the train  
without! [*Exit* LUDWIG.]

*Ida.* And so  
You yield, at once, to him what I for hours  
Might supplicate in vain.

*Sieg. (smiling).* You are not jealous  
Of me, I trust, my pretty rebel! who 260  
Would sanction disobedience against all  
Except thyself? But fear not; thou shalt rule him  
Hereafter with a fonder sway and firmer.

*Ida.* But I should like to govern *now*.  
*Sieg.* You shall,  
Your *harp*, which by the way awaits you with  
The Countess in her chamber. She complains  
That you are a sad truant to your music:  
She attends you.

*Ida.* Then good morrow, my kind kinsmen!  
Ulric, you'll come and hear me?

*Ulr.* By and by.

*Ida.* Be sure I'll sound it better than your bugles; 270

Then pray you be as punctual to its notes :  
I'll play you King Gustavus' march.

*Ulr.* And why not  
Old Tilly's?

*Ida.* Not that monster's ! I should think  
My harp-strings rang with groans, and not with music,  
Could aught of *his* sound on it :—but come quickly ;  
Your mother will be eager to receive you. [*Exit* IDA.]

*Sieg.* Ulric, I wish to speak with you alone.

*Ulr.* My time's your vassal.—  
(*Aside to* RODOLPH.) Rodolph, hence ! and do  
As I directed : and by his best speed  
And readiest means let Rosenberg reply. 280

*Rod.* Count Siegendorf, command you aught ? I am  
bound

Upon a journey past the frontier.

*Sieg.* (*starts*). Ah !—  
Where ? on *what* frontier ?

*Rod.* The Silesian, on  
My way—(*Aside to* ULRIC.)—Where shall I say ?

*Ulr.* (*aside to* RODOLPH). To Hamburg.  
(*Aside to himself*). That

Word will, I think, put a firm padlock on  
His further inquisition.

*Rod.* Count, to Hamburg.

*Sieg.* (*agitated*). Hamburg ! No, I have nought to  
do there, nor

Am aught connected with that city. Then  
God speed you !

*Rod.* Fare ye well, Count Siegendorf !  
[*Exit* RODOLPH.]

*Sieg.* Ulric, this man, who has just departed, is 290  
One of those strange companions whom I fain  
Would reason with you on.

*Ulr.* My Lord, he is  
Noble by birth, of one of the first houses  
In Saxony.

*Sieg.* I talk not of his birth,  
But of his bearing. Men speak lightly of him.

*Ulr.* So they will do of most men. Even the monarch  
Is not fenced from his chamberlain's slander, or



The sneer of the last courtier whom he has made  
Great and ungrateful.

*Sieg.* If I must be plain,  
The world speaks more than lightly of this Rodolph : 300  
They say he is leagued with the "black bands" who still  
Ravage the frontier.

*Ulr.* And will you believe  
The world ?

*Sieg.* In this case—yes.

*Ulr.* In *any* case,  
I thought you knew it better than to take  
An accusation for a sentence.

*Sieg.* Son !  
I understand you : you refer to—— but  
My destiny has so involved about me  
Her spider web, that I can only flutter  
Like the poor fly, but break it not. Take heed,  
Ulric ; you have seen to what the passions led me : 310  
Twenty long years of misery and famine  
Quenched them not—twenty thousand more, perchance,  
Hereafter (or even here in *moments* which  
Might date for years, did Anguish make the dial),  
May not obliterate or expiate  
The madness and dishonour of an instant.  
Ulric, be warned by a father !—I was not  
By mine, and you behold me !

*Ulr.* I behold  
The prosperous and beloved Siegendorf,  
Lord of a Prince's appanage, and honoured 320  
By those he rules and those he ranks with.

*Sieg.* Ah !  
Why wilt thou call me prosperous, while I fear  
For thee ? Belovéd, when thou lovest me not !  
All hearts but one may beat in kindness for me—  
But if my son's is cold !——

*Ulr.* Who *dare* say that ?  
*Sieg.* None else but I, who see it—*feel* it—keener  
Than would your adversary, who dared say so,  
Your sabre in his heart ! But mine survives  
The wound.

*Ulr.* You err. My nature is not given

To outward fondling : how should it be so, 330  
After twelve years' divorcement from my parents ?

*Sieg.* And did not *I* too pass those twelve torn years  
In a like absence ? But 'tis vain to urge you—  
Nature was never called back by remonstrance.  
Let's change the theme. I wish you to consider  
That these young violent nobles of high name,  
But dark deeds (aye, the darkest, if all Rumour  
Reports be true), with whom thou consortest,  
Will lead thee——

*Ulr.* (*impatiently*). I'll be *led* by no man.

*Sieg.*

Nor

Be leader of such, I would hope : at once 340  
To wean thee from the perils of thy youth  
And haughty spirit, I have thought it well  
That thou shouldst wed the lady *Ida*—more  
As thou appear'st to love her.

*Ulr.*

I have said

I will obey your orders, were they to  
Unite with *Hecate*—can a son say more ?

*Sieg.* He says too much in saying this. It is not  
The nature of thine age, nor of thy blood,  
Nor of thy temperament, to talk so coolly,  
Or act so carelessly, in that which is 350  
The bloom or blight of all men's happiness,  
(For *Glory's* pillow is but restless, if  
Love lay not down his cheek there) : some strong bias,  
Some master fiend is in thy service, to  
Misrule the mortal who believes him slave,  
And makes his every thought subservient ; else  
Thou'dst say at once—" I love young *Ida*, and  
Will wed her ;" or, " I love her not, and all  
The powers on earth shall never make me."—So  
Would *I* have answered.

*Ulr.*

Sir, *you* wed for love.

360

*Sieg.* I did, and it has been my only refuge  
In many miseries.

*Ulr.*

Which miseries

Had never been but for this love-match.

*Sieg.*

Still

Against your age and nature ! Who at twenty

E'er answered thus till now ?

*Ulr.* Did you not warn me  
Against your own example ?

*Sieg.* Boyish sophist !  
In a word, do you love, or love not, Ida ?

*Ulr.* What matters it, if I am ready to  
Obey you in espousing her ?

*Sieg.* As far  
As you feel, nothing—but all life for her. 370  
She 's young—all-beautiful—adores you—is  
Endowed with qualities to give happiness,  
Such as rounds common life into a dream  
Of something which your poets cannot paint,  
And (if it were not wisdom to love virtue),  
For which Philosophy might barter Wisdom ;  
And giving so much happiness, deserves  
A little in return. I would not have her  
Break her heart with a man who has none to break !  
Or wither on her stalk like some pale rose 380  
Deserted by the bird she thought a nightingale,  
According to the Orient tale.<sup>1</sup> She is——

*Ulr.* The daughter of dead Stralenheim, your foe :  
I'll wed her, ne'ertheless ; though, to say truth,  
Just now I am not violently transported  
In favour of such unions.

*Sieg.* But she loves you.

*Ulr.* And I love her, and therefore would think *twice*.

*Sieg.* Alas ! Love never did so.

*Ulr.* Then 'tis time  
He should begin, and take the bandage from  
His eyes, and look before he leaps ; till now 390  
He hath ta'en a jump i' the dark.

*Sieg.* But you consent ?

*Ulr.* I did, and do.

*Sieg.* Then fix the day.

*Ulr.* 'Tis usual,  
And, certes, courteous, to leave that to the lady.

*Sieg.* I will engage for *her*.

*Ulr.* So will not *I*

1. [For "the attachment of the nightingale to the rose," see *Giaour*, lines 21-31, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 86, note 1.]

For any woman : and as what I fix,  
I fain would see unshaken, when she gives  
Her answer, I'll give mine.

*Sieg.* But 'tis your office  
To woo.

*Ulr.* Count, 'tis a marriage of your making,  
So be it of your wooing ; but to please you,  
I will now pay my duty to my mother, 400  
With whom, you know, the lady Ida is.—  
What would you have ? You have forbid my stirring  
For manly sports beyond the castle walls,  
And I obey ; you bid me turn a chamberer,  
To pick up gloves, and fans, and knitting-needles,  
And list to songs and tunes, and watch for smiles,  
And smile at pretty prattle, and look into  
The eyes of feminine, as though they were  
The stars receding early to our wish  
Upon the dawn of a world-winning battle— 410  
What can a son or man do more ? [*Exit ULRIC.*]

*Sieg. (solus).* Too much !—  
Too much of duty, and too little love !  
He pays me in the coin he owes me not :  
For such hath been my wayward fate, I could not  
Fulfil a parent's duties by his side  
Till now ; but love he owes me, for my thoughts  
Ne'er left him, nor my eyes longed without tears  
To see my child again,—and now I have found him !  
But how ! obedient, but with coldness ; duteous  
In my sight, but with carelessness ; mysterious— 420  
Abstracted—distant—much given to long absence,  
And where—none know—in league with the most riotous  
Of our young nobles ; though, to do him justice,  
He never stoops down to their vulgar pleasures ;  
Yet there 's some tie between them which I can not  
Unravel. They look up to him—consult him—  
Throng round him as a leader : but with me  
He hath no confidence ! Ah ! can I hope it  
After—what ! doth my father's curse descend  
Even to my child ? Or is the Hungarian near 430  
To shed more blood ? or—Oh ! if it should be !  
Spirit of Stralenheim, dost thou walk these walls

To wither him and his—who, though they slew not,  
Unlatched the door of Death for thee? 'Twas not  
Our fault, nor is our sin : thou wert our foe,  
And yet I spared thee when my own destruction  
Slept with thee, to awake with thine awakening !  
And only took—Accurséd gold ! thou liest  
Like poison in my hands ; I dare not use thee,  
Nor part from thee ; thou camest in such a guise, 440  
Methinks thou wouldst contaminate all hands  
Like mine. Yet I have done, to atone for thee,  
Thou villanous gold ! and thy dead master's doom,  
Though he died not by me or mine, as much  
As if he were my brother ! I have ta'en  
His orphan Ida—cherished her as one  
Who will be mine.

*Enter an ATTENDANT.*

*Atten.* The abbot, if it please  
Your Excellency, whom you sent for, waits  
Upon you. *[Exit ATTENDANT.*

*Enter the PRIOR ALBERT.*

*Prior.* Peace be with these walls, and all  
Within them !

*Sieg.* Welcome, welcome, holy father ! 450  
And may thy prayer be heard !—all men have need  
Of such, and I——

*Prior.* Have the first claim to all  
The prayers of our community. Our convent,  
Erected by your ancestors, is still  
Protected by their children.

*Sieg.* Yes, good father ;  
Continue daily orisons for us  
In these dim days of heresies and blood,  
Though the schismatic Swede, Gustavus, is  
Gone home.

*Prior.* To the endless home of unbelievers,  
Where there is everlasting wail and woe, 460  
Gnashing of teeth, and tears of blood, and fire  
Eternal, and the worm which dieth not !

*Sieg.* True, father : and to avert those pangs from one,  
Who, though of our most faultless holy Church,  
Yet died without its last and dearest offices,  
Which smooth the soul through purgatorial pains,  
I have to offer humbly this donation  
In masses for his spirit.

[*SIEGENDORF offers the gold which he had taken from STRALENHEIM.*

*Prior.* Count, if I  
Receive it, 'tis because I know too well  
Refusal would offend you. Be assured 470  
The largess shall be only dealt in alms,  
And every mass no less sung for the dead.  
Our House needs no donations, thanks to yours,  
Which has of old endowed it ; but from you  
And yours in all meet things 'tis fit we obey.  
For whom shall mass be said ?

*Sieg. (faltering).* For—for—the dead.

*Prior.* His name ?

*Sieg.* 'Tis from a soul, and not a name,  
I would avert perdition.

*Prior.* I meant not  
To pry into your secret. We will pray  
For one unknown, the same as for the proudest. 480

*Sieg.* Secret ! I have none : but, father, he who 's gone  
Might *have* one ; or, in short, he did bequeath—  
No, not bequeath—but I bestow this sum  
For pious purposes.

*Prior.* A proper deed  
In the behalf of our departed friends.

*Sieg.* But he who 's gone was not my friend, but foe,  
The deadliest and the staunchest.

*Prior.* Better still !  
To employ our means to obtain Heaven for the souls  
Of our dead enemies is worthy those  
Who can forgive them living.

*Sieg.* But I did not 490  
Forgive this man. I loathed him to the last,  
As he did me. I do not love him now,  
But——

*Prior.* Best of all ! for this is pure religion !

You fain would rescue him you hate from hell—  
An evangelical compassion—with  
Your own gold too !

*Sieg.* Father, 'tis not my gold.

*Prior.* Whose, then ? You said it was no legacy.

*Sieg.* No matter whose—of this be sure, that he  
Who owned it never more will need it, save  
In that which it may purchase from your altars : 500  
'Tis yours, or theirs.

*Prior.* Is there no blood upon it ?

*Sieg.* No ; but there 's worse than blood—eternal  
shame !

*Prior.* Did he who owned it die in his *bed* ?

*Sieg.* Alas !  
He did.

*Prior.* Son ! you relapse into revenge,  
If you regret your enemy's bloodless death.

*Sieg.* His death was fathomlessly deep in blood.

*Prior.* You said he died in his bed, not battle.

*Sieg.* He  
Died, I scarce know—but—he was stabbed i' the dark,  
And now you have it—perished on his pillow  
By a cut-throat !—Aye !—you may look upon me ! 510  
I am *not* the man. I'll meet your eye on that point,  
As I can one day God's.

*Prior.* Nor did he die  
By means, or men, or instrument of yours ?

*Sieg.* No ! by the God who sees and strikes !

*Prior.* Nor know you  
Who slew him ?

*Sieg.* I could only guess at *one*,  
And he to me a stranger, unconnected,  
As unemployed. Except by one day's knowledge,  
I never saw the man who was suspected.

*Prior.* Then you are free from guilt.

*Sieg. (eagerly).* Oh ! am I ?—say !

*Prior.* You have said so, and know best.

*Sieg.* Father ! I have spoken 520  
The truth, and nought but truth, if *not* the *whole* ;  
Yet say I am *not* guilty ! for the blood  
Of this man weighs on me, as if I shed it,

Though, by the Power who abhorreth human blood,  
I did not!—nay, once spared it, when I might  
And *could*—aye, perhaps, *should* (if our self-safety  
Be e'er excusable in such defences  
Against the attacks of over-potent foes):  
But pray for him, for me, and all my house;  
For, as I said, though I be innocent, 530  
I know not why, a like remorse is on me,  
As if he had fallen by me or mine. Pray for me,  
Father! I have prayed myself in vain.

*Prior.* I will.  
Be comforted! You are innocent, and should  
Be calm as innocence.

*Sieg.* But calmness is not  
Always the attribute of innocence.  
I feel it is not.

*Prior.* But it will be so,  
When the mind gathers up its truth within it.  
Remember the great festival to-morrow,  
In which you rank amidst our chiefest nobles, 540  
As well as your brave son; and smooth your aspect,  
Nor in the general orison of thanks  
For bloodshed stopt, let blood you shed not rise,  
A cloud, upon your thoughts. This were to be  
Too sensitive. Take comfort, and forget  
Such things, and leave remorse unto the guilty. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A large and magnificent Gothic Hall in the  
Castle of Siegendorf, decorated with Trophies, Banners,  
and Arms of that Family.*

*Enter ARNHEIM and MEISTER, attendants of COUNT  
SIEGENDORF.*

*Arn.* Be quick! the Count will soon return: the ladies  
Already are at the portal. Have you sent  
The messengers in search of him he seeks for?



*Meis.* I have, in all directions, over Prague,  
As far as the man's dress and figure could  
By your description track him. The devil take  
These revels and processions! All the pleasure  
(If such there be) must fall to the spectators,—  
I'm sure none doth to us who make the show.

*Arn.* Go to! my Lady Countess comes.

*Meis.* I'd rather 10  
Ride a day's hunting on an outworn jade,  
Than follow in the train of a great man,  
In these dull pageantries.

*Arn.* Begone! and rail  
Within.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter the* COUNTESS JOSEPHINE SIEGENDORF *and*  
IDA STRALENHEIM.

*Jos.* Well, Heaven be praised! the show is over.

*Ida.* How can you say so? Never have I dreamt  
Of aught so beautiful. The flowers, the boughs,  
The banners, and the nobles, and the knights,  
The gems, the robes, the plumes, the happy faces,  
The coursers, and the incense, and the sun  
Streaming through the stained windows, even the *tombs*, 20  
Which looked so calm, and the celestial hymns,  
Which seemed as if they rather came from Heaven  
Than mounted there—the bursting organ's peal  
Rolling on high like an harmonious thunder;  
The white robes and the lifted eyes; the world  
At peace! and all at peace with one another!  
Oh, my sweet mother! [*Embracing* JOSEPHINE.

*Jos.* My beloved child!  
For such, I trust, thou shalt be shortly.

*Ida.* Oh!  
I am so already. Feel how my heart beats!

*Jos.* It does, my love; and never may it throb 30  
With aught more bitter.

*Ida.* Never shall it do so!  
How should it? What should make us grieve? I hate  
To hear of sorrow: how can we be sad,  
Who love each other so entirely? You,

The Count, and Ulric, and your daughter Ida.

*Jos.* Poor child !

*Ida.* Do you pity me ?

*Jos.* No : I but envy,  
And that in sorrow, not in the world's sense  
Of the universal vice, if one vice be  
More general than another.

*Ida.* I'll not hear  
A word against a world which still contains 40  
You and my Ulric. Did you ever see  
Aught like him ? How he towered amongst them all !  
How all eyes followed him ! The flowers fell faster—  
Rained from each lattice at his feet, methought,  
Than before all the rest ; and where he trod  
I dare be sworn that they grow still, nor e'er  
Will wither.

*Jos.* You will spoil him, little flatterer,  
If he should hear you.

*Ida.* But he never will.  
I dare not say so much to him—I fear him.

*Jos.* Why so ? he loves you well.

*Ida.* But I can never 50  
Shape my thoughts of him into words to him :  
Besides, he sometimes frightens me.

*Jos.* How so ?

*Ida.* A cloud comes o'er his blue eyes suddenly,  
Yet he says nothing.

*Jos.* It is nothing : all men,  
Especially in these dark troublous times,  
Have much to think of.

*Ida.* But I cannot think  
Of aught save him.

*Jos.* Yet there are other men,  
In the world's eye, as goodly. There's, for instance,  
The young Count Waldorf, who scarce once withdrew  
His eyes from yours to-day.

*Ida.* I did not see him, 60  
But Ulric. Did you not see at the moment  
When all knelt, and I wept ? and yet, methought,  
Through my fast tears, though they were thick and warm,  
I saw him smiling on me.

*Jos.* I could not  
See aught save Heaven, to which my eyes were raised,  
Together with the people's.

*Ida.* I thought too  
Of Heaven, although I looked on Ulric.

*Jos.* Come,  
Let us retire ! they will be here anon,  
Expectant of the banquet. We will lay  
Aside these nodding plumes and dragging trains. 70

*Ida.* And, above all, these stiff and heavy jewels,  
Which make my head and heart ache, as both throb  
Beneath their glitter o'er my brow and zone.  
Dear mother, I am with you.

*Enter COUNT SIEGENDORF, in full dress, from the  
solemnity, and LUDWIG.*

*Sieg.* Is he not found ?

*Lud.* Strict search is making every where ; and if  
The man be in Prague, be sure he will be found.

*Sieg.* Where 's Ulric ?

*Lud.* He rode round the other way  
With some young nobles ; but he left them soon ;  
And, if I err not, not a minute since  
I heard his Excellency, with his train, 80  
Gallop o'er the west drawbridge.

*'Enter ULRIC, splendidly dressed.*

*Sieg. (to LUDWIG).* See they cease not  
Their quest of him I have described. [*Exit LUDWIG.*  
Oh, Ulric !

How have I longed for thee !

*Ulr.* Your wish is granted—  
Behold me !

*Sieg.* I have seen the murderer.

*Ulr.* Whom ? Where ?

*Sieg.* The Hungarian, who slew Stralenheim.

*Ulr.* You dream.

*Sieg.* I live ! and as I live, I saw him—  
Heard him ! he dared to utter even my name.

*Ulr.* What name ?

*Sieg.*

Werner ! 'twas mine.

*Ulr.*

It must be so

No more : forget it.

*Sieg.*

Never ! never ! all

My destinies were woven in that name :

90

It will not be engraved upon my tomb,

But it may lead me there.

*Ulr.*

To the point—the Hungarian ?

*Sieg.* Listen !—The church was thronged : the hymn  
was raised ;“ *Te Deum* ” pealed from nations rather than

From choirs, in one great cry of “ God be praised ”

For one day's peace, after thrice ten dread years,

Each bloodier than the former : I arose,

With all the nobles, and as I looked down

Along the lines of lifted faces,—from

Our bannered and escutcheoned gallery, I

100

Saw, like a flash of lightning (for I saw

A moment and no more), what struck me sightless

To all else—the Hungarian's face ! I grew

Sick ; and when I recovered from the mist

Which curled about my senses, and again

Looked down, I saw him not. The thanksgiving

Was over, and we marched back in procession.

*Ulr.* Continue.*Sieg.*

When we reached the Muldau's bridge,

The joyous crowd above, the numberless

Barks manned with revellers in their best garbs,

110

Which shot along the glancing tide below,

The decorated street, the long array,

The clashing music, and the thundering

Of far artillery, which seemed to bid

A long and loud farewell to its great doings,

The standards o'er me, and the tramlings round,

The roar of rushing thousands,—all—all could not

Chase this man from my mind, although my senses

No longer held him palpable.

*Ulr.*

You saw him

No more, then ?

*Sieg.*

I looked, as a dying soldier

120

Looks at a draught of water, for this man ;

But still I saw him not ; but in his stead——

*Ulr.* What in his stead ?

*Sieg.* My eye for ever fell  
Upon your dancing crest ; the loftiest.  
As on the loftiest and the loveliest head,  
It rose the highest of the stream of plumes,  
Which overflowed the glittering streets of Prague.

*Ulr.* What's this to the Hungarian ?

*Sieg.* Much ! for I  
Had almost then forgot him in my son ;  
When just as the artillery ceased, and paused 130  
The music, and the crowd embraced in lieu  
Of shouting, I heard in a deep, low voice,  
Distinct and keener far upon my ear  
Than the late cannon's volume, this word—" *Werner !* "

*Ulr.* Uttered by——

*Sieg.* HIM ! I turned—and saw—and fell.

*Ulr.* And wherefore ? Were you seen ?

*Sieg.* The officious care  
Of those around me dragged me from the spot,  
Seeing my faintness, ignorant of the cause :  
You, too, were too remote in the procession  
(The old nobles being divided from their children) 140  
To aid me.

*Ulr.* But I'll aid you now.

*Sieg.* In what ?

*Ulr.* In searching for this man, or——When he's found,  
What shall we do with him ?

*Sieg.* I know not that.

*Ulr.* Then wherefore seek ?

*Sieg.* Because I cannot rest  
Till he is found. His fate, and Stralenheim's,  
And ours, seem intertwined ! nor can be  
Unravell'd, till——

*Enter an ATTENDANT.*

*Atten.* A stranger to wait on  
Your Excellency.

*Sieg.* Who ?

*Atten.* He gave no name.

*Sieg.* Admit him, ne'ertheless.

[*The ATTENDANT introduces GABOR, and afterwards exit.*

Ah !

*Gab.*

'Tis then Werner !

*Sieg. (haughtily).* The same you knew, sir, by that name ; and you ! 150

*Gab. (looking round).* I recognise you both : father and son,

It seems. Count, I have heard that you, or yours, Have lately been in search of me : I am here.

*Sieg.* I have sought you, and have found you : you are charged

(Your own heart may inform you why) with such A crime as—— [He pauses.

*Gab.* Give it utterance, and then I'll meet the consequences.

*Sieg.* You shall do so— Unless——

*Gab.* First, who accuses me ?

*Sieg.* All things,

If not all men : the universal rumour—

My own presence on the spot—the place—the time— 160

And every speck of circumstance unite

To fix the blot on you.

*Gab.* And on *me only* ?

Pause ere you answer : is no other name,

Save mine, stained in this business ?

*Sieg.* Trifling villain !

Who play'st with thine own guilt ! Of all that breathe

Thou best dost know the innocence of him

'Gainst whom thy breath would blow thy bloody slander.

But I will talk no further with a wretch,

Further than justice asks. Answer at once,

And without quibbling, to my charge.

*Gab.* 'Tis false ! 170

*Sieg.* Who says so ?

*Gab.* I.

*Sieg.* And how disprove it ?

*Gab.* By

The presence of the murderer.

*Sieg.*

Name him.

*Gab.*

He

May have more names than one. Your Lordship had so  
Once on a time.

*Sieg.*

If you mean me, I dare

Your utmost.

*Gab.*

You may do so, and in safety ;

I know the assassin.

*Sieg.*

Where is he ?

*Gab. (pointing to ULRIC).*

Beside you !

[ULRIC *rushes forward to attack* GABOR ; SIEGENDORF  
*interposes.*

*Sieg.*

Liar and fiend ! but you shall not be slain ;  
These walls are mine, and you are safe within them.

Ulric, repel this calumny, as I [He turns to ULRIC.

Will do. I avow it is a growth so monstrous, 180

I could not deem it earth-born : but be calm ;

It will refute itself. But touch him not.

[ULRIC *endeavours to compose himself.*

*Gab.* Look at *him*, Count, and then *hear me*.

*Sieg. (first to GABOR, and then looking at ULRIC).*

I hear thee.

My God ! you look——

*Ulr.*

How ?

*Sieg.*

As on that dread night,

When we met in the garden.

*Ulr. (composing himself).* It is nothing.

*Gab.* Count, you are bound to hear me. I came  
hither

Not seeking you, but sought. When I knelt down  
Amidst the people in the church, I dreamed not  
To find the beggared Werner in the seat  
Of Senators and Princes ; but you have called me, 190  
And we have met.

*Sieg.*

Go on, sir.

*Gab.*

Ere I do so,

Allow me to inquire, who profited  
By Stralenheim's death ? Was't I—as poor as ever ;  
And poorer by suspicion on my name !  
The Baron lost in that last outrage neither  
Jewels nor gold ; his life alone was sought.—

A life which stood between the claims of others  
To honours and estates scarce less than princely.

*Sieg.* These hints, as vague as vain, attach no less  
To me than to my son.

*Gab.* I can't help that. 200

But let the consequence alight on him  
Who feels himself the guilty one amongst us  
I speak to you, Count Siegendorf, because  
I know you innocent, and deem you just.  
But ere I can proceed—*dare* you protect me?  
*Dare* you command me?

[*SIEGENDORF first looks at the Hungarian, and then  
at ULRIC, who has unbuckled his sabre, and is  
drawing lines with it on the floor—still in its  
sheath.*

*Ulr.* (*looks at his father, and says,*) Let the man go on!

*Gab.* I am unarmed, Count, bid your son lay down  
His sabre.

*Ulr.* (*offers it to him contemptuously.*) Take it.

*Gab.* No, sir, 'tis enough  
That we are both unarmed—I would not choose  
To wear a steel which may be stained with more 210  
Blood than came there in battle.

*Ulr.* (*casts the sabre from him in contempt.*) It—or some  
Such other weapon in my hand—spared yours  
Once, when disarmed and at my mercy.

*Gab.* True—

I have not forgotten it: you spared me for  
Your own especial purpose—to sustain  
An ignominy not my own.

*Ulr.* Proceed.

The tale is doubtless worthy the relater.  
But is it of my father to hear further? [*To SIEGENDORF.*

*Sieg.* (*takes his son by the hand.*) My son, I know my  
own innocence, and doubt not  
Of yours—but I have promised this man patience; 220  
Let him continue.

*Gab.* I will not detain you,  
By speaking of myself much: I began  
Life early—and am what the world has made me.  
At Frankfort on the Oder, where I passed



A winter in obscurity, it was  
My chance at several places of resort  
(Which I frequented sometimes, but not often)  
To hear related a strange circumstance  
In February last. A martial force,  
Sent by the state, had, after strong resistance, 230  
Secured a band of desperate men, supposed  
Marauders from the hostile camp.—They proved,  
However, not to be so—but banditti,  
Whom either accident or enterprise  
Had carried from their usual haunt—the forests  
Which skirt Bohemia—even into Lusatia.  
Many amongst them were reported of  
High rank—and martial law slept for a time.  
At last they were escorted o'er the frontiers,  
And placed beneath the civil jurisdiction 240  
Of the free town of Frankfort. Of *their* fate  
I know no more.

*Sieg.* And what is this to Ulric?

*Gab.* Amongst them there was said to be one man  
Of wonderful endowments:—birth and fortune,  
Youth, strength, and beauty, almost superhuman,  
And courage as unrivalled, were proclaimed  
His by the public rumour; and his sway,  
Not only over his associates, but  
His judges, was attributed to witchcraft,  
Such was his influence:—I have no great faith 250  
In any magic save that of the mine—  
I therefore deemed him wealthy.—But my soul  
Was roused with various feelings to seek out  
This prodigy, if only to behold him.

*Sieg.* And did you so?

*Gab.* You'll hear. Chance favoured me:  
A popular affray in the public square  
Drew crowds together—it was one of those  
Occasions where men's souls look out of them,  
And show them as they are—even in their faces:  
The moment my eye met his, I exclaimed, 260  
“This is the man!” though he was then, as since,  
With the nobles of the city. I felt sure  
I had not erred, and watched him long and nearly;

I noted down his form—his gesture—features,  
Stature, and bearing—and amidst them all,  
'Midst every natural and acquired distinction,  
I could discern, methought, the assassin's eye  
And gladiator's heart.

*Ulr. (smiling).* The tale sounds well.

*Gab.* And may sound better.—He appeared to me  
One of those beings to whom Fortune bends, 270  
As she doth to the daring—and on whom  
The fates of others oft depend ; besides,  
An indescribable sensation drew me  
Near to this man, as if my point of fortune  
Was to be fixed by him.—There I was wrong.

*Sieg.* And may not be right now.

*Gab.* I followed him,  
Solicited his notice—and obtained it—  
Though not his friendship :—it was his intention  
To leave the city privately—we left it  
Together—and together we arrived 280  
In the poor town where Werner was concealed,  
And Stralenheim was succoured——Now we are on  
The verge—*dare* you hear further ?

*Sieg.* I must do so—  
Or I have heard too much.

*Gab.* I saw in you  
A man above his station—and if not  
So high, as now I find you, in my then  
Conceptions, 'twas that I had rarely seen  
Men such as you appeared in height of mind,  
In the most high of worldly rank ; you were  
Poor, even to all save rags : I would have shared 290  
My purse, though slender, with you—you refused it.

*Sieg.* Doth my refusal make a debt to you,  
That thus you urge it ?

*Gab.* Still you owe me something,  
Though not for that ; and I owed you my safety,  
At least my seeming safety, when the slaves  
Of Stralenheim pursued me on the grounds  
That I had robbed him.

*Sieg.* I concealed you—I,  
Whom and whose house you arraign, reviving viper !

*Gab.* I accuse no man—save in my defence.  
 You, Count, have made yourself accuser—judge : 300  
 Your hall's my court, your heart is my tribunal.  
 Be just, and *I'll* be merciful !

*Sieg.* You merciful?—  
 You ! Base calumniator !

*Gab.* I. 'Twill rest  
 With me at last to be so. You concealed me—  
 In secret passages known to yourself,  
 You said, and to none else. At dead of night,  
 Weary with watching in the dark, and dubious  
 Of tracing back my way, I saw a glimmer,  
 Through distant crannies, of a twinkling light :  
 I followed it, and reached a door—a secret 310  
 Portal—which opened to the chamber, where,  
 With cautious hand and slow, having first undone  
 As much as made a crevice of the fastening,  
 I looked through and beheld a purple bed,  
 And on it Strahlenheim !—

*Sieg.* Asleep ! And yet  
 You slew him !—Wretch !

*Gab.* He was already slain,  
 And bleeding like a sacrifice. My own  
 Blood became ice.

*Sieg.* But he was all alone !  
 You saw none else ? You did not see the——

[*He pauses from agitation.*

*Gab.* No,  
*He*, whom you dare not name, nor even I 320  
 Scarce dare to recollect, was not then in  
 The chamber.

*Sieg. (to ULRIC).* Then, my boy ! thou art guiltless still—  
 Thou had'st me say *I* was so once.—Oh ! now  
 Do thou as much.

*Gab.* Be patient ! I can *not*  
 Recede now, though it shake the very walls  
 Which frown above us. You remember,—or  
 If not, your son does,—that the locks were changed  
 Beneath *his* chief inspection on the morn  
 Which led to this same night : how he had entered  
 He best knows—but within an antechamber, 330

The door of which was half ajar, I saw  
A man who washed his bloody hands, and oft  
With stern and anxious glance gazed back upon—  
The bleeding body—but it moved no more.

*Sieg.* Oh ! God of fathers !

*Gab.*

I beheld his features

As I see yours—but yours they were not, though  
Resembling them—behold them in Count Ulric's !  
Distinct as I beheld them, though the expression  
Is not now what it then was !—but it was so  
When I first charged him with the crime—so lately. 340

*Sieg.* This is so——

*Gab. (interrupting him).* Nay—but hear me to the end !  
Now you must do so.—I conceived myself  
Betrayed by you and *him* (for now I saw  
There was some tie between you) into this  
Pretended den of refuge, to become  
The victim of your guilt ; and my first thought  
Was vengeance : but though armed with a short poniard  
(Having left my sword without), I was no match  
For him at any time, as had been proved  
That morning—either in address or force. 350

I turned and fled—i' the dark : chance rather than  
Skill made me gain the secret door of the hall,  
And thence the chamber where you slept : if I  
Had found you *waking*, Heaven alone can tell  
What vengeance and suspicion might have prompted ;  
But ne'er slept guilt as Werner slept that night.

*Sieg.* And yet I had horrid dreams ! and such brief  
sleep,

The stars had not gone down when I awoke.  
Why didst thou spare me ? I dreamt of my father—  
And now my dream is out !

*Gab.*

'Tis not my fault,

360

If I have read it.—Well ! I fled and hid me—  
Chance led me here after so many moons—  
And showed me Werner in Count Siegendorf !  
Werner, whom I had sought in huts in vain,  
Inhabited the palace of a sovereign !  
You sought me and have found me—now you know  
My secret, and may weigh its worth.

*Sieg.* (*after a pause*). Indeed!

*Gab.* Is it revenge or justice which inspires  
Your meditation?

*Sieg.* Neither—I was weighing  
The value of your secret.

*Gab.* You shall know it 370  
At once:—When you were poor, and I, though poor,  
Rich enough to relieve such poverty  
As might have envied mine, I offered you  
My purse—you would not share it:—I'll be franker  
With you: you are wealthy, noble, trusted by  
The imperial powers—you understand me?

*Sieg.* Yes.

*Gab.* Not quite. You think me venal, and scarce  
true:

'Tis no less true, however, that my fortunes  
Have made me both at present. You shall aid me:  
I would have aided you—and also have 380  
Been somewhat damaged in my name to save  
Yours and your son's. Weigh well what I have said.

*Sieg.* Dare you await the event of a few minutes'  
Deliberation?

*Gab.* (*casts his eyes on ULRIC, who is leaning against a  
pillar*). If I should do so?

*Sieg.* I pledge my life for yours. Withdraw into  
This tower. [*Opens a turret-door.*]

*Gab.* (*hesitatingly*). This is the second safe asylum  
You have offered me.

*Sieg.* And was not the first so?

*Gab.* I know not that even now—but will approve  
The second. I have still a further shield.—  
I did not enter Prague alone; and should I 390  
Be put to rest with Stralenheim, there are  
Some tongues without will wag in my behalf.  
Be brief in your decision!<sup>1</sup>

*Sieg.* I will be so.—

1. [*"Gab. I have yet an additional security—I did not enter Prague a solitary individual; and there are tongues without that will speak for me, although I should even share the fate of Stralenheim! Let your deliberation be short.—Sieg. My promise is solemn—sacred—irrevocable: it extends not, however, beyond my own walls."*—*Canterbury Tales*, 1838, ii. 268; see, too, pp. 269, 270.]

My word is sacred and irrevocable  
Within *these* walls, but it extends no further.

*Gab.* I'll take it for so much.

*Sieg.* (*points to ULRIC'S sabre, still upon the ground*).  
Take also *that*—

I saw you eye it eagerly, and him  
Distrustfully.

*Gab.* (*takes up the sabre*). I will ; and so provide  
To sell my life—not cheaply.

[*GABOR goes into the turret, which SIEGENDORF closes.*

*Sieg.* (*advances to ULRIC*). Now, Count Ulric !  
For son I dare not call thee—What say'st thou ? 400

*Ulr.* His tale is true.

*Sieg.* True, monster !

*Ulr.* Most true, father !

And you did well to listen to it : what  
We know, we can provide against. He must  
Be silenced.

*Sieg.* Aye, with half of my domains ;  
And with the other half, could he and thou  
Unsay this villany.

*Ulr.* It is no time  
For trifling or dissembling. I have said  
His story 's true ; and he too must be silenced.

*Sieg.* How so ?

*Ulr.* As Stralenheim is. Are you so dull  
As never to have hit on this before ? 410

When we met in the garden, what except  
Discovery in the act could make me know  
His death ? Or had the Prince's household been  
Then summoned, would the cry for the police  
Been left to such a stranger ? Or should I  
Have loitered on the way ? Or could *you, Werner,*  
The object of the Baron's hate and fears,  
Have fled, unless by many an hour before  
Suspicion woke ? I sought and fathomed you,  
Doubting if you were false or feeble : I 420  
Perceived you were the latter : and yet so  
Confiding have I found you, that I doubted  
At times your weakness.

*Sieg.* Parricide ! no less

Than common stabber ! What deed of my life,  
Or thought of mine, could make you deem me fit  
For your accomplice ?

*Ulr.* Father, do not raise  
The devil you cannot lay between us. This  
Is time for union and for action, not  
For family disputes. While *you* were tortured,  
Could *I* be calm ? Think you that I have heard 430  
This fellow's tale without some feeling ?—You  
Have taught me feeling for *you* and myself ;  
For whom or what else did you ever teach it ?

*Sieg.* Oh ! my dead father's curse ! 'tis working now.

*Ulr.* Let it work on ! the grave will keep it down !  
Ashes are feeble foes : it is more easy  
To baffle such, than countermine a mole,  
Which winds its blind but living path beneath you.  
Yet hear me still !—If *you* condemn me, yet,  
Remember *who* hath taught me once too often 440  
To listen to him ! *Who* proclaimed to me  
That *there were crimes* made venial by the occasion ?  
That passion was our nature ? that the goods  
Of Heaven waited on the goods of fortune ?  
*Who* showed me his humanity secured  
By his *nerves* only ? *Who* deprived me of  
All power to vindicate myself and race  
In open day ? By his disgrace which stamped  
(It might be) bastardy on me, and on  
Himself—a *felon's* brand ! The man who is 450  
At once both warm and weak invites to deeds  
He longs to do, but dare not. Is it strange  
That I should *act* what you could *think* ? We have done  
With right and wrong ; and now must only ponder  
Upon effects, not causes. Stralenheim,  
Whose life I saved from impulse, as *unknown*,  
I would have saved a peasant's or a dog's, I slew  
*Known* as our foe—but not from vengeance. He  
Was a rock in our way which I cut through,  
As doth the bolt, because it stood between us 460  
And our true destination—but not idly.  
As stranger I preserved him, and he *owed me*  
His *life* : when due, I but resumed the debt.

He, you, and I stood o'er a gulf wherein  
I have plunged our enemy. *You* kindled first  
The torch—*you* showed the path; now trace me that  
Of safety—or let me!

*Sieg.* I have done with life!

*Ulr.* Let us have done with that which cankers life—  
Familiar feuds and vain recriminations  
Of things which cannot be undone. We have 470  
No more to learn or hide: I know no fear,  
And have within these very walls men who  
(Although you know them not) dare venture all things.  
You stand high with the state; what passes here  
Will not excite her too great curiosity:  
Keep your own secret, keep a steady eye,  
Stir not, and speak not;—leave the rest to me:  
We must have no *third* babblers thrust between us.

[*Exit* ULRIC.

*Sieg. (solus).* Am I awake? are these my father's halls?  
And *you*—my son? *My* son! *mine*! who have ever 480  
Abhorred both mystery and blood, and yet  
Am plunged into the deepest hell of both!  
I must be speedy, or more will be shed—  
The Hungarian's!—Ulric—he hath partisans,  
It seems: I might have guessed as much. Oh fool!  
Wolves prowl in company. He hath the key  
(As I too) of the opposite door which leads  
Into the turret. Now then! or once more  
To be the father of fresh crimes, no less  
Than of the criminal! Ho! Gabor! Gabor! 490

[*Exit into the turret, closing the door after him.*

SCENE II.—*The Interior of the Turret.*

GABOR and SIEGENDORF.

*Gab.* Who calls?

*Sieg.* I—Siegendorf! Take these and fly!  
Lose not a moment!

[*Tears off a diamond star and other jewels, and thrusts  
them into GABOR's hand.*

*Gab.* What am I to do



With these ?

*Sieg.* Whate'er you will : sell them, or hoard,  
And prosper ; but delay not, or you are lost !

*Gab.* You pledged your honour for my safety !

*Sieg.* And  
Must thus redeem it. Fly ! I am not master,  
It seems, of my own castle—of my own  
Retainers—nay, even of these very walls,  
Or I would bid them fall and crush me ! Fly !  
Or you will be slain by——

*Gab.* Is it even so ? 10  
Farewell, then ! Recollect, however, Count,  
You sought this fatal interview !

*Sieg.* I did :  
Let it not be more fatal still !—Begone !

*Gab.* By the same path I entered ?

*Sieg.* Yes ; that 's safe still ;  
But loiter not in Prague ;—you do not know  
With whom you have to deal.

*Gab.* I know too well—  
And knew it ere yourself, unhappy Sire !  
Farewell ! [Exit GABOR.

*Sieg.* (*solus and listening*). He hath cleared the staircase.  
Ah ! I hear

The door sound loud behind him ! He is safe !  
Safe !—Oh, my father's spirit !—I am faint—— 20  
[*He leans down upon a stone seat, near the wall of the  
tower, in a drooping posture.*

*Enter ULRIC with others armed, and with weapons drawn.*

*Ulr.* Despatch !—he 's there !

*Lud.* The Count, my Lord !

*Ulr.* (*recognizing SIEGENDORF*). You here, sir !

*Sieg.* Yes : if you want another victim, strike !

*Ulr.* (*seeing him stript of his jewels*). Where is the ruffian  
who hath plundered you ?

Vassals, despatch in search of him ! You see  
'Twas as I said—the wretch hath stript my father  
Of jewels which might form a Prince's heir-loom !

Away ! I'll follow you forthwith.

[*Exeunt all but SIEGENDORF and ULRIC.*  
What 's this ?

Where is the villain ?

*Sieg.* There are *two*, sir : which

Are you in quest of ?

*Ulr.* Let us hear no more

Of this : he must be found. You have not let him 30  
Escape ?

*Sieg.* He 's gone.

*Ulr.* With your connivance ?

*Sieg.* With

My fullest, freest aid.

*Ulr.* Then fare you well !

[*ULRIC is going.*

*Sieg.* Stop ! I command—entreat—implore ! Oh, Ulric !  
Will you then leave me ?

*Ulr.* What ! remain to be

Denounced—dragged, it may be, in chains ; and all  
By your inherent weakness, half-humanity,  
Selfish remorse, and temporizing pity,  
That sacrifices your whole race to save  
A wretch to profit by our ruin ! No, Count,  
Henceforth you have no son !

*Sieg.* I never had one ; 40

And would you ne'er had borne the useless name !  
Where will you go ? I would not send you forth  
Without protection.

*Ulr.* Leave that unto me.

I am not alone ; nor merely the vain heir  
Of your domains ; a thousand, aye, ten thousand  
Swords, hearts, and hands are mine.

*Sieg.* The foresters !

With whom the Hungarian found you first at Frankfort !

*Ulr.* Yes—men—who are worthy of the name ! Go  
tell

Your Senators that they look well to Prague ;  
Their Feast of Peace was early for the times ; 50  
There are more spirits abroad than have been laid  
With Wallenstein !

*Enter JOSEPHINE and IDA.*

*Jos.* What is't we hear? My Siegendorf!  
Thank Heaven, I see you safe!

*Sieg.* Safe!

*Ida.* Yes, dear father!

*Sieg.* No, no; I have no children: never more  
Call me by that worst name of parent.

*Jos.* What  
Means my good Lord?

*Sieg.* That you have given birth  
To a demon!

*Ida* (*taking ULRIC's hand*). Who shall dare say this of  
Ulric?

*Sieg.* Ida, beware! there's blood upon that hand.

*Ida* (*stooping to kiss it*). I'd kiss it off, though it were  
mine.

*Sieg.* It is so!

*Ulr.* Away! it is your father's! [*Exit ULRIC.*

*Ida.* Oh, great God! 60  
And I have loved this man!

[*IDA falls senseless—JOSEPHINE stands speechless with  
horror.*

*Sieg.* The wretch hath slain  
Them both!—My Josephine! we are now alone!  
Would we had ever been so!—All is over  
For me!—Now open wide, my sire, thy grave;  
Thy curse hath dug it deeper for thy son  
In mine!—The race of Siegendorf is past.

The end of the fifth act and the Drama.

B. P. Jy 20, 1822.

# WERNER.

Nov. 1815.

[FIRST DRAFT.]

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A ruinous chateau on the Silesian frontier of Bohemia.*

*Josepha.* THE storm is at it's height—how the wind  
howls,

Like an unearthly voice, through these lone chambers !  
And the rain patters on the flapping casement  
Which quivers in it's frame—the night is starless—  
Yet cheerly Werner ! still our hearts are warm :  
The tempest is without, or should be so—  
For we are sheltered here where Fortune's clouds  
May roll all harmless o'er us as the wrath  
Of these wild elements that menace now,  
Yet do not reach us.

*Werner (without attending, and walking disturbedly, speaking to himself).* No—'Tis past—'tis blighted,  
The last faint hope to which my withered fortune      11  
Clung with a feeble and a fluttering grasp,  
Yet clung convulsively—for twas the *last*—  
Is broken with the rest : would that my heart were  
But there is pride, and passion's war within,  
Which give my breast vitality to suffer,  
As it hath suffered through long years till now.  
My father's wrath extends beyond the grave,

And haunts me in the shape of Stralenheim !  
He revels in my fathers palace—I— 20  
Exiled—disherited—a nameless outcast !

[*Werner pauses.*

My boy, too, where and what is he?—my father  
Might well have limited his curse to me.  
If that my heritage had passed to Ulric,  
I had not mourned my own less happy lot.  
No—No—all 's past—all torn away.

*Josepha.* Dear Werner,  
Oh banish these discomfortable thoughts  
That thus contend within you : we are poor,  
So we have ever been—but I remember  
The time when thy Josepha's smile could turn 30  
Thy heart to hers—despite of every ill.  
So let it now—alas ! you hear me not.

*Werner.* What said you?—let it pass—no matter  
what—

Think me not churlish, Sweet, I am not well.  
My brain is hot and busy—long fatigue  
And last night's watching have oppressed me much.

*Josepha.* Then get thee to thy couch. I do perceive  
In thy pale cheek and in thy bloodshot eye  
A strange distemperature—nay, as a boon,  
I do entreat thee to thy rest.

*Werner.* My rest ! 40  
Well—be it so—Good Night !

*Josepha.* Thy hand is burning ;  
I will prepare a potion :—peace be with thee—  
Tomorrow's dawn I trust will find thee healthful ;  
And, then, our Ulric may perchance—

*Werner.* Our Ulric—thine and mine—our only boy—  
Curse on his father and his father's Sire !  
(For, if it is so, I will render back  
A curse that Heaven will hear as well as his),  
Our Ulric by his father's fault or folly,  
And by my father's unrelenting pride, 50  
Is at this hour, perchance, undone. This night  
That shelters us may shower it's wrath on him—  
A homeless beggar for his parent's sin—  
Thy sin and mine—Thy child and mine atones—

Our Ulric—Woman!—I'll to no bed to-night—  
There is no pillow for my thoughts.

*Joseph.* What words,  
What fearful words are these! what may they mean?

*Werner.* Look on me—thou hast known me, hitherto,  
As an oppressed, but yet a humble creature;  
By birth predestined to the yoke I've borne. 60  
Till now I've borne it patiently, at least,  
In bitter silence—but the hour is come,  
That should and shall behold me as I was,  
And ought again to be—

*Joseph.* I know not what  
Thy mystery may tend to, but my fate—  
My heart—my will—my love are linked with thine,  
And I would share thy sorrow: lay it open.

*Werner.* Thou see'st the son of Count—but let it  
pass—

I forfeited the name in wedding thee:  
That fault of many faults a father's pride 70  
Proclaimed the last and worst—and, from that hour,  
He disavowed, disherited, debased  
A wayward son — — tis a long tale—too long—  
And I am heartsick of the heavy thought.

*Joseph.* Oh, I could weep—but that were little solace:  
Yet tell the rest—or, if thou wilt not, say—  
Yet say—why, through long years, from me withheld,  
This fearful secret that hath gnawed thy soul?

*Werner.* Why? had it not been base to call on thee  
For patience and for pity—to awake 80  
The thirst of grandeur in thy gentle spirit—  
To tell thee what thou shouldst have been—the wife  
Of one, in power—birth—wealth, preeminent—  
Then, sudden quailing in that lofty tone,  
To bid thee soothe thy husband—peasant Werner?

*Joseph.* I would thou wert, indeed, the peasant  
Werner;

For then thy soul had been of calmer mould,  
And suited to thy lot——

*Werner.* Was it not so?  
Beneath a humble name and garb—the which  
My youthful riot and a father's frown, 90

Too justly fixed upon me, had compelled  
My bowed down spirit to assume too well—  
Since it deceived the world, myself, and thee :  
I linked my lot irrevocably with thine—  
And I have loved thee deeply—long and dearly—  
Even as I love thee still—but these late crosses,  
And most of all the last,—have maddened me ;  
And I am wild and wayward as in youth,  
Ere I beheld thee—

*Josepha.* Would thou never hadst !  
Since I have been a blight upon thy hope, 100  
And marred alike the present and the future.

*Werner.* Yet say not so—for all that I have known  
Of true and calm content—of love—of peace—  
Has been with thee and from thee : wert thou not,  
I were a lonely and self-loathing thing.  
Ulric has left us ! all, save thou, have left me !  
Father and son—Fortune—Fame—Power—Ambition—  
The ties of being—the high soul of man—  
All save the long remorse—the consciousness,  
The curse of living on, regretting life 110  
Mispent in miserably gazing upward,  
While others soared—Away, I'll think no more.

*Josepha.* But Ulric—wherefore didst thou let him  
leave  
His home and us ? tis now three weary years.

*Werner (interrupting her quickly).* Since my hard  
father, half-relenting, sent  
The offer of a scanty stipend which  
I needs must earn by rendering up my son—  
Fool that I was—I thought this quick compliance,  
And never more assuming in myself  
The haught name of my house would soften him— 120  
And for our child secure the heritage  
Forfeit in me forever. Since that hour,  
Till the last year, the wretched pittance came—  
Then ceased with every tidings of my son  
And Sire—till late I heard the last had ceased  
To live—and unforgiving died—Oh God !

*Josepha.* Was it for this our Ulric left us so ?  
Thou didst't deceive me then—he went not forth

To join the legions of Count Tilly's war?

*Werner.* I know not—he had left my father's castle, 130  
Some months before his death—but why?—but why?  
Left it as I did ere his birth, perchance,  
Like me an outcast. Old age had not made  
My father meeker—and my son, Alas!  
Too much his Sire resembled——

*Josepha.* Yet there's comfort.  
Restrain thy wandering Spirit—Ulric cannot  
Have left his native land—thou dost not know,  
Though it looks strangely, thy Sire and he  
In anger parted—Hope is left us still.

*Werner.* The best hope that I ever held in youth,  
When every pulse was life, each thought a joy, 141  
(Yet not irrationally sanguine, since  
My birth bespoke high thoughts,) hath lured and left me.  
I will not be a dreamer in mine age—  
The hunter of a shadow—let *boys hope*:  
Of Hope I now know nothing but the name—  
And that's a sound which jars upon my heart.  
I've wearied thee—Good night—my patient Love

*Josepha.* I must not leave thee thus—my husband—  
friend——

My heart is rent in twain for thee—I scarce 150  
Dare greet thee as I would, lest that my love  
Should seem officious and ill timed:—'tis early—  
Yet rest were as a healing balm to thee—  
Then once again—Good night!

*Voice Without.* What Ho—lights ho!

## SCENE II.

*Josepha.* What noise is that? 'tis nearer—hush! they  
knock.

[*A knocking heard at the gate—WERNER starts.*

*Werner (aside).* It may be that the bloodhounds of  
the villain,  
Who long has tracked me, have approached at last:  
I'll not be taken tamely.

*Josepha.* 'Twas the voice,



The single voice of some lone traveller.  
I'll to the door.

*Werner.* No—stay thou here—again !

[*Knocking repeated. Opens the door.*]

Well—Sir—your pleasure ?

*Enter CARL the Bavarian.*

*Carl.* Thanks most worthy Sir !  
My pleasure, for to-night, depends on yours—  
I'm weary, wet, and wayworn—without shelter,  
Unless you please to grant it.

*Josepha.* You shall have it, 10  
Such as this ruinous mansion may afford :  
Tis spacious, but too cold and crazy now  
For Hospitality's more cordial welcome :  
But as it is 'tis yours.

*Werner (to his wife).* Why say ye so ?  
At once such hearty greeting to a stranger ?  
At such a lonely hour, too—

*Josepha (in reply to Werner).* Nay—he's honest.  
There is trust-worthiness in his blunt looks.

*Werner (to Josepha).* "Trustworthiness in looks !"   
I'll trust no looks !

I look into men's faces for their age,  
Not for their actions—had he Adam's brow, 20  
Open and goodly as before the fall,  
I've lived too long to trust the frankest aspect.

(*To Carl.*) Whence come you Sir ?

*Carl.* From Frankfort, on my way  
To my own country—I've a companion too—  
He tarries now behind :—an hour ago,  
On reaching that same river on your frontier,  
We found it swoln by storms—a stranger's carriage,  
Despite the current, drawn by sturdy mules,  
Essay'd to pass, and nearly reached the middle  
Of that which was the *ford* in gentler weather, 30  
When down came driver, carriage, mules, and all—  
You may suppose the worthy Lord within  
Fared ill enough :—worse still he might have suffered,

But that my comrade and myself rushed in,  
And with main strength and some good luck beside,  
Dislodged and saved him : he'll be here anon.  
His equipage by this time is at Dresden—  
I left it floating that way.

*Werner.* Where is he ?

*Carl.* Hitherward on his way, even like myself—  
We saw the light and made for the nearest shelter : 40  
You'll not deny us for a single night ?  
You've room enough, methinks—and this vast ruin  
Will not be worse for three more guests.

*Werner.* Two more :  
And thou?—well—be it so—(*aside*) (tonight will soon  
Be overpast : they shall not stay tomorrow)—  
Know you the name of him you saved ?

*Carl.* Not I !  
I think I heard him called a Baron Something—  
But was too chill to stay and hear his titles :  
You know they are sometimes tedious in the reckoning,  
If counted over by the noble wearer. 50  
Has't any wine ? I'm wet, stung to the marrow—  
My comrade waited to escort the Baron :  
They will be here, anon—they, too, want cheering :  
I'll taste for them, if it please you, courteous host !

*Josepha.* Such as our vintage is shall give you  
welcome :  
I'll bring you some anon. [*goes out.*]

*Carl (looking round).* A goodly mansion !  
And has been nobly tenanted, I doubt not.  
This worn magnificence some day has shone  
On light hearts and long revels—those torn banners  
Have waved o'er courtly guests—and yon huge lamp  
High blazed through many a midnight—I could wish 61  
My lot had led me here in those gay times !  
Your days, my host, must pass but heavily.  
Are you the vassal of these antient chiefs,  
Whose heir wastes elsewhere their fast melting hoards,  
And placed to keep their cobwebs company ?

*Werner (who has been absorbed in thought till the latter  
part of his speech).* A Vassal !—I a vassal !—*who*  
accosts me

With such familiar question?—(*checks himself and says aside*)—Down startled pride!

Have not long years of wretchedness yet quenched thee,  
And, suffering evil, wilt thou start at scorn? 70

(*To Carl.*) Sir! if I boast no birth—and, as you see,  
My state bespeaks none—still, no being breathes  
Who calls me slave or servant.—Like yourself  
I am a stranger here—a lonely guest—  
But, for a time, on sufferance. On my way,  
From—a far distant city—Sickness seized,  
And long detained me in the neighbouring hamlet.  
The Intendant of the owner of this castle,  
Then uninhabited, with kind intent,  
Permitted me to wait returning health 80  
Within these walls—more sheltered than the cot  
Of humble peasants.

*Carl.* Worthy Sir, your mercy!  
I meant not to offend you—plain of speech,  
And blunt in apprehension, I do judge  
Men's station from their seeming—but themselves  
From acts alone. You bid me share your shelter,  
And I am bound to you; and had you been  
The lowliest vassal had not thanked you less,  
Than I do now, believing you his better,  
Perhaps my own superior—

*Werner.* What imports it? 90  
What—who I am—or whence—you are welcome—sit—  
You shall have cheer anon. (*walks disturbedly aside*)

*Carl (to himself).* Here's a strange fellow!  
Wild, churlish, angry—*why*, I know not, seek not.  
Would that the wine were come! my doublet's wet,  
But my throat dry as Summer's drought in desarts.  
Ah—here it sparkles!

*Enter JOSEPHA with wine in flask—and a cup. As she pours it out a Voice is heard without calling at a distance. WERNER starts—JOSEPHA listens tremulously.*

*Werner.* That voice—that voice—Hark!  
No—no—tis silent—Sir—I say—that voice—  
Whose is it—speak—

*Carl* (*drinking unconcernedly*). Whose is it? faith, I know not—

And, yet, 'tis my companion's : he's like you,  
And does not care to tell his name and station. 100

[*The voice again and nearer.*

*Josepha*. 'Tis his—I knew it—Ulric!—Ulric!—Ulric!  
[*She drops the wine and rushes out.*

*Carl*. The flask's unhurt—but every drop is spilt.  
Confound the voice! I say—would he were dumb!  
And faith! to me, he has been nearly so—  
A silent and unsocial travelling mate.

*Werner* (*stands in agitation gazing towards the door*).  
If it be he—I cannot move to meet him.  
Yes—it must be so—there is no such voice  
That so could sound and shake me : he is here,  
And I am—

*Enter STRALENHEIM.*

*Werner* (*turns and sees him*). A curse upon thee,  
stranger!

Where did'st thou learn a tone so like my boy's? 110  
Thou mock bird of my hopes—a curse upon thee!  
Out! Out! I say. Thou shalt not harbour here.

*Stralenheim*. What means the peasant? knows he  
unto whom  
He dares address this language?

*Carl*. Noble Sir!  
Pray heed him not—he's Phrenzy's next door neighbour,  
And full of these strange starts and causeless jarrings.

*Werner*. Oh, that long wished for voice!—I dreamed  
of it—  
And then it did elude me—then—and now.

*Enter ULRIC and JOSEPHA. WERNER falls on his neck.*

Oh God! forgive, for thou did'st not forget me.  
Although I murmured—tis—it is my Son! 120

*Josepha*. Aye, 'tis dear Ulric—yet, methinks, he's  
changed, too :  
His cheek is tanned, his frame more firmly knit!

That scar, too, dearest Ulric—I do fear me—  
Thou hast been battling with these heretics,  
And that 's a Swedish token on thy brow.

*Ulric.* My heart is glad with yours—we meet like those  
Who never would have parted :—of the past  
You shall know more anon—but, here 's a guest  
That asks a gentle welcome. Noble Baron,  
My father's silence looks discourtesy :  
Yet must I plead his pardon—'tis his love  
Of a long truant that has rapt him, thus,  
From hospitable greeting—you'll be seated—  
And, Father, we will sup like famished hunters.

130

*JOSEPHA goes out here.*

*Stralenheim.* I have much need of rest: no more  
refreshment!  
Were all my people housed within the hamlet,  
Or can they follow?

*Ulric.* Not to night I fear.  
They staid in hope the damaged Cabriole  
Might, with the dawn of day, have such repairs,  
As circumstance admits of.

*Carl.* Nay—that 's hopeless. 140  
They must not only mend but draw it too.  
The mules are drowned—a murrain on them both!  
One kicked me as I would have helped him on.

*Stralenheim.* It is most irksome to me—this delay.  
I was for Prague on business of great moment.

*Werner.* For Prague—Sir—Say you?—

*Stralenheim.* Yes, my host! for Prague.  
And these vile floods and villainous cross roads  
Steal my time from it's uses—but—my people?  
Where do they shelter?

*Ulric.* In the boatman's shed,  
Near to the ferry: you mistook the ford—  
Tis higher to the right:—their entertainment  
Will be but rough—but 'tis a single night,  
And they had best be guardians of the baggage.  
The shed will hold the weather from their sleep,  
The woodfire warm them—and, for beds, a cloak

150

Is swansdown to a seasoned traveller :  
It has been mine for many a moon, and may  
Tonight, for aught it recks me.

*Stralenheim.* And tomorrow  
I must be on my journey—and betimes.  
It is not more than three days travel, hence, 160  
To Mansfeldt Castle.

*Werner and Ulric.* Mansfeldt Castle !—  
*Stralenheim.* Aye !

For thither tends my progress—so, betimes,  
Mine host I would be stirring—think of that !  
And let me find my couch of rest at present.

*Werner.* You shall Sir—but—to Mansfeldt !—  
[ULRIC stops his father and says aside to him,  
*Silence—father—*

Whate'er it be that shakes you thus—*tread down—*  
(*To Stralenheim*) My father, Sir, was born not far  
from Prague,

And knows it's environs—and, when he hears,  
The name endeared to him by native thoughts,  
He would ask of it, and it's habitants— 170  
You will excuse his plain blunt mode of question.

*Stralenheim.* Indeed, perchance, then, he may aid my  
search.

Pray, know you aught of one named Werner ? who  
(But he no doubt has passed through many names),  
Lived long in Hamburgh—and has thence been traced  
Into Silesia—and not far from hence—  
But there we lost him ; he who can disclose  
Aught of him, or his hiding-place, will find  
Advantage in revealing it.

*Ulric.* Why so—Sir ?

*Stralenheim.* There are strong reasons to suspect this  
man 180

Of crimes against the State—league with Swedes—  
And other evil acts of moment :—he  
Who shall deliver him, bound hand and foot,  
Will benefit his country and himself :  
I will reward him doubly too.

*Ulric.* You know him ?

*Stralenheim.* He never met my eyes—but Circumstance

Has led me to near knowledge of the man.  
He is a villain—and an enemy  
To all men—most to me ! If earth contain him,  
He shall be found and fettered : I have hopes, 190  
By traces which tomorrow will unravel,  
A fresh clue to his lurking spot is nigh.

*Carl.* And, if I find it, I will break the thread.  
What, all the world against one luckless wight !  
And he a fugitive—I would I knew him !

*Ulric.* You'd help him to escape—is it not so ?

*Carl.* I would, indeed !

*Ulric.* The greater greenhorn you !  
I would secure him—nay—I will do so.

*Stralenheim.* If it be so—my gratitude for aid,  
And rescue of my life from the wild waters, 200  
Will double in it's strength and it's requital.  
Your father, too, perhaps can help our search ?

*Werner.* I turn a spy—no—not for *Mansfeldt Castle*,  
And all the broad domain it frowns upon.

*Stralenheim.* Mansfeldt again!—you know it then?  
perchance,  
You also know the story of it's lords ?

*Werner.* Whate'er I know, there is no bribe of thine  
Can swerve me to the crooked path thou pointest.  
The chamber's ready, which your rest demands.

*Stralenheim (aside).* 'Tis strange—this peasant's tone  
is wondrous high, 210

His air imperious—and his eye shines out  
As wont to look command with a quick glance—  
His garb befits him not—why, he may be  
The man I look for ! now, I look again,  
There is the very lip—short curling lip—  
And the oerjutting eye-brow dark and large,  
And the peculiar wild variety  
Of feature, even unto the Viper's eye,  
Of that detested race, and it's descendant  
Who stands alone between me and a power, 220  
Which Princes gaze at with unquiet eyes !  
This is no peasant—but, whate'er he be,  
Tomorrow shall secure him and unfold.

*Ulric.* It will not please you, Sir, then to remain

With us beyond tomorrow?

*Strahlenheim.* Nay—I do not say so—there is no haste.  
And now I think again—I'll tarry here—  
Perhaps until the floods abate—we'll see—  
In the mean time—to my chamber—so—Good Night !  
[*Exit with WERNER.*

*Werner.* This way, Sir.

*Carl.* And I to mine : pray, where are we to rest? 230  
We'll sup within—

*Ulric.* What matter where—there 's room.

*Carl.* I would fain see my way through this vast  
ruin ;

Come take the lamp, and we'll explore together.

*Josepha* (*meeting them*). And I will with my son.

*Ulric.* Nay—stay—dear mother !

These chilly damps and the cold rush of winds

Fling a rough paleness o'er thy delicate cheek—

And thou seem'st lovely in thy sickness

Of most transparent beauty :—but it grieves me.

Nay ! tarry here by the blaze of the bright hearth :—

I will return anon—and we have much 240

To listen and impart. Come, Carl, we'll find

Some gorgeous canopy, and, thence, unroost

It's present bedfellows the bats—and thou

Shalt slumber underneath a velvet cloud

That mantles o'er the couch of some dead Countess.

[*Exit CARL and ULRIC.*

*Josepha* (*sola*). It was my joy to see him—nothing  
more

I should have said—which sent my gush of blood

Back on my full heart with a dancing tide :

It was my weary hope's unthought fulfilment,

My agony of mother-feelings curdled 250

At once in gathered rapture—which did change

My cheek into the hue of fainting Nature.

I should have answered thus—and yet I could not :

For though 'twas true—it was not all the truth.

I have much suffered in the thought of Werner's

Late deep distemperature of mind and fortunes,

Which since have almost driven him into phrenzy :—

And though that I would soothe, not share, such passions,



And show not how they shake me :—when alone,  
I feel them prey upon me by reflection, 260  
And want the very solace I bestowed ;  
And which, it seems, I cannot give and have.  
Ulric must be my comforter—his father's  
Hath long been the most melancholy soul  
That ever hovered o'er the verge of Madness :  
And, better, had he leapt into it's gulph :  
Though to the Mad thoughts are realities,  
Yet they can play with sorrow—and live on.  
But with the mind of consciousness and care  
The body wears to ruin, and the struggle, 270  
However long, is deadly—— He is lost,  
And all around him tasteless :—in his mirth  
His very laughter moves me oft to tears,  
And I have turned to hide them—for, in him,  
As Sunshine glittering o'er unburied bones——  
Soft—he is here.——

*Werner.*

Josepha—where is Ulric?

*Josepha.* Gone with the other stranger to gaze o'er  
These shattered corridors, and spread themselves  
A pillow with their mantles, in the least ruinous :  
I must replenish the diminished hearth 280  
In the inner chamber—the repast is ready,  
And Ulric will be here again.—

T

THE  
DEFORMED TRANSFORMED:  
A DRAMA.

T



## INTRODUCTION TO *THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED.*

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THE date of the original MS. of *The Deformed Transformed* is "Pisa, 1822." There is nothing to show in what month it was written, but it may be conjectured that it was begun and finished within the period which elapsed between the death of Allegra, April 20, and the death of Shelley, July 8, 1822. According to Medwin (*Conversations*, 1824, p. 227), an unfavourable criticism of Shelley's ("It is a bad imitation of *Faust*"), together with a discovery that "two entire lines" of Southey's—

"And water shall see thee,  
And fear thee, and flee thee"—

were imbedded in one of his "Songs," touched Byron so deeply that he "threw the poem into the fire," and concealed the existence of a second copy for more than two years. It is a fact that Byron's correspondence does not contain the remotest allusion to *The Deformed Transformed*; but, with regard to the plagiarism from Southey, in the play as written in 1822 there is neither Song nor Incantation which could have contained two lines from *The Curse of Kehama*.

As a dramatist, Byron's function, or *métier*, was twofold. In *Manfred*, in *Cain*, in *Heaven and Earth*, he is concerned with the analysis and evolution of metaphysical or ethical notions; in *Marino Faliero*, in *Sardanapalus*, and *The Two Foscari*, he set himself "to dramatize striking passages of history;" in *The Deformed Transformed* he sought to combine the solution of a metaphysical puzzle or problem, the relation of personality to individuality, with the scenic rendering of a striking historical episode, the Sack of Rome in 1527.

In the note or advertisement prefixed to the drama, Byron acknowledges that "the production" is founded partly on the story of a forgotten novel, *The Three Brothers*, and partly on "the *Faust* of the great Goethe."

Arnaud, or Julian, the hero of *The Three Brothers* (by Joshua Pickersgill, jun., 4 vols., 1803), "sells his soul to the Devil, and becomes an arch-fiend in order to avenge himself for the taunts of strangers on the deformity of his person" (see *Gent. Mag.*, November, 1804, vol. 74, p. 1047; and *post*, pp. 473-479). The idea of an escape from natural bonds or disabilities by supernatural means and at the price of the soul or will, the *un*-Christlike surrender to the tempter, which is the *grund-stoff* of the Faust-legend, was brought home to Byron, in the first instance, not by Goethe, or Calderon, or Marlowe, but by Joshua Pickersgill. A fellow-feeling lent an intimate and peculiar interest to the theme. He had suffered all his life from a painful and inconvenient defect, which his proud and sensitive spirit had magnified into a deformity. He had been stung to the quick by his mother's taunts and his sweetheart's ridicule, by the jeers of the base and thoughtless, by slanderous and brutal paragraphs in newspapers. He could not forget that he was lame. If his enemies had but possessed the wit, they might have given him "the sobriquet of *Le Diable Boiteux*" (letter to Moore, April 2, 1823, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 179). It was no wonder that so poignant, so persistent a calamity should be "reproduced in his poetry" (*Life*, p. 13), or that his passionate impatience of such a "thorn in the flesh" should picture to itself a mysterious and unhallowed miracle of healing. It is true, as Moore says (*Life*, pp. 45, 306), that "the trifling deformity of his foot" was the embittering circumstance of his life," that it "haunted him like a curse;" but it by no means follows that he seriously regarded his physical peculiarity as a stamp of the Divine reprobation, that "he was possessed by an *idée fixe* that every blessing would be 'turned into a curse' to him" (letter of Lady Byron to H. C. Robinson, *Diary, etc.*, 1869, iii. 435, 436). No doubt he indulged himself in morbid fancies, played with the extravagances of a restless imagination, and wedded them to verse; but his intellect, "brooding like the day, a master o'er a slave," kept guard. He would never have pleaded on his own behalf that the tyranny of an *idée fixe*, a delusion that he was predestined to evil, was an excuse for his shortcomings or his sins.

Byron's very considerable obligations to *The Three Brothers* might have escaped notice, but the resemblance between his "Stranger," or "Cæsar," and the Mephistopheles of "the great Goethe" was open and palpable.

If Medwin may be trusted (*Conversations*, 1824, p. 210), Byron had read "*Faust* in a sorry French translation," and it is probable that Shelley's inspired rendering of "May-day

Night," which was published in *The Liberal* (No. i., October 14, 1822, pp. 123-137), had been read to him, and had attracted his attention. *The Deformed Transformed* is "a Faustish kind of drama;" and Goethe, who maintained that Byron's play as a whole was "no imitation," but "new and original, close, genuine, and spirited," could not fail to perceive that "his devil was suggested by my Mephistopheles" (*Conversations*, 1874, p. 174). The tempter who cannot resist the temptation of sneering at his own wiles, who mocks for mocking's sake, is not Byron's creation, but Goethe's. Lucifer talked at the clergy, if he did not "talk like a clergyman;" but the "bitter hunchback," even when he is *solus*, sneers as the river wanders, "at his own sweet will." He is not a doctor, but a spirit of unbelief!

The second part of *The Deformed Transformed* represents, in three scenes, the Siege and Sack of Rome in 1527. Byron had read Robertson's *Charles the Fifth* (ed. 1798, ii. 313-329) in his boyhood (*Life*, p. 47), but it is on record that he had studied, more or less closely, the narratives of contemporary authorities. A note to *The Prophecy of Dante* (*Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 258) refers to the *Sacco di Roma*, descritto da Luigi Guicciardini, and the *Ragguaglio Storico . . . sacco di Roma dell' anno MDXXVII.* of Jacopo Buonaparte; and it is evident that he was familiar with Cellini's story of the marvellous gestic and exploits *quorum maxima pars fuit*, which were wrought at "the walls by the Campo Santo," or on the ramparts of the Castle of San Angelo.

The Sack of Rome was a great national calamity, and it was something more: it was a profanation and a sacrilege. The literature which it evoked was a cry of anguish, a prophetic burden of despair. "Chants populaires," writes M. Emile Gebhart (*De l'Italie*, "Le Sac de Rome en 1527," 1876, pp. 267, *sq.*), "*Nouvelles* de Giraldi Cintio, en forme de Décameron . . . récits historiques . . . de César Grollier, *Dialogues* anonymes . . . poésies de Pasquin, toute une littérature se développa sur ce thème douloureux. . . . Le *Lamento di Roma*, œuvre étrange, d'inspiration gibeline, rappelle les espérances politiques exprimées jadis par Dante . . . 'Bien que César m'ait dépouillée de liberté, nous avons toujours été d'accord dans une même volonté. Je ne me lamenterais pas si lui régnait; mais je crois qu'il est ressuscité, ou qu'il ressuscitera véritablement, car souvent un Ange m'a annoncé qu'un César viendrait me délivrer.' . . . Enfin, voici une chanson française que répétaient en repassant les monts les soldats du Marquis de Saluces:—

" Parlons de la défaite  
De ces pauvres Romains,

Aussi de la complainte  
De notre père saint.

“O noble roy de France,  
Regarde en pitié  
L'Eglise en ballance . . .  
Pour Dieu ! ne tarde plus,  
C'est ta mère, ta substance ;  
O fils, n'en faictz reffus.”

“Le dernier monument,” adds M. Gebhart, in a footnote, “de cette littérature, est le singulier drame de Byron, *The Deformed Transformed*, dont Jules César est le héros, et le Sac de Rome le cadre.”

It is unlikely that Byron, who read everything he could lay his hands upon, and spared no trouble to master his “period,” had not, either at first or second hand, acquainted himself with specimens of this popular literature. (For *La Presa e Lamento di Roma*, *Romæ Lamentatio*, etc., see *Lamenti Storici dei Secoli xiv., xv.* (Medin e Fratri), *Scelta di Curiosità*, etc., 235, 236, 237, Bologna, 1890, vol. iii. See, too, for “Chanson sur la Mort du Connétable de Bourbon,” *Recueil de Chants historiques français*, par A. J. V. Le Roux de Lincy, 1842, ii. 99.)

*The Deformed Transformed* was published by John Hunt, February 20, 1824. A third edition appeared February 23, 1824.

It was reviewed, unfavourably, in the *London Magazine*, March, 1824, vol. 9, pp. 315-321; the *Scots Magazine*, March, 1824, N.S. vol. xiv. pp. 353-356; and in the *Monthly Review*, March, 1824, Enlarged Series, 103, pp. 321, 324. One reviewer, however (*London Magazine*), had the candour to admit that “Lord Byron may write below himself, but he can never write below us !”

For the unfinished third part, *vide post*, pp. 532-534.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THIS production is founded partly on the story of a novel called "The Three Brothers,"<sup>1</sup> published many

1. [*The Three Brothers*, by Joshua Pickersgill, junior, was published in 1803. There is no copy of *The Three Brothers* in the British Museum. The following extracts are taken from a copy in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (vol. 4, cap. xi. pp. 229-350) :—

"Arnaud, the natural son of the Marquis de Souvricour, was a child 'extraordinary in Beauty and Intellect.' When travelling with his parents to Languedoc, Arnaud being 8 years old, he was shot at by banditti, and forsaken by his parents. The Captain of the band nursed him. 'But those perfections to which Arnaud owed his existence, ceased to adorn it. The ball had gored his shoulder, and the fall had dislocated it; by the latter misadventure his spine likewise was so fatally injured as to be irrecoverable to its pristine uprightness. Injuries so compound confounded the Captain, who sorrowed to see a creature so charming, at once deformed by a crooked back and an excrescent shoulder.' Arnaud was found and taken back to his parents. 'The bitterest consciousness of his deformity was derived from their indelicate, though, perhaps, insensible alteration of conduct. . . . Of his person he continued to speak as of an abhorrent enemy. . . . "Were a blessing submitted to my choice, I would say, [said Arnaud] be it my immediate dissolution." "I think," said his mother, . . . "that you could wish better." "Yes," adjoined Arnaud, "for that wish should be that I ever had remained unborn." He polishes the broken blade of a sword, and views himself therein; the sight so horrifies him that he determines to throw himself over a precipice, but draws back at the last moment. He goes to a cavern, and conjures up the prince of hell. "Arnaud knew himself to be interrogated. What he required. . . . What was that answer the effects explain. . . . There passed in liveliest portraiture the various men distinguished for that beauty and grace which Arnaud so much desired, that he was ambitious to purchase them with his soul. He felt that it was his part to chuse whom he would resemble, yet he remained unresolved, though the spectator of an hundred shades of renown, among which glided by Alexander, Alcibiades, and Hephestion : at length appeared the supernatural effigy of a man, whose perfections human artist never could depict or insculp—Demetrius, the son of Antigonus. Arnaud's heart heaved quick with preference, and strait he found within his hand the



years ago, from which M. G. Lewis's "Wood Demon"<sup>1</sup> was also taken; and partly on the "Faust" of the great Goëthe. The present publication<sup>2</sup> contains the two first Parts only, and the opening chorus of the third. The rest may perhaps appear hereafter.

resemblance of a poniard, its point inverted towards his breast. A mere automaton in the hands of the Demon, he thrust the point through his heart, and underwent a painless death. During his trance, his spirit metempsychosed from the body of his detestation to that of his admiration. . . . Arnaud awoke a Julian!"]

1. [For a *résumé* of M. G. Lewis's *Wood Demon* (afterwards re-cast as *One O'clock*; or, *The Knight and the Wood-Demon*, 1811), see "First Visit to the Theatre in London," *Poems*, by Hartley Coleridge, 1851, i., Appendix C, pp. cxcix.-cciii. The *Wood Demon* in its original form was never published.]

2. [Mrs. Shelley inscribed the following note on the fly-leaf of her copy of *The Deformed Transformed*.:-

"This had long been a favourite subject with Lord Byron. I think that he mentioned it also in Switzerland. I copied it—he sending a portion of it at a time, as it was finished, to me. At this time he had a great horror of its being said that he plagiarised, or that he studied for ideas, and wrote with difficulty. Thus he gave Shelley Aikins' edition of the British poets, that it might not be found in his house by some English loungeur, and reported home; thus, too, he always dated when he began and when he ended a poem, to prove hereafter how quickly it was done. I do not think that he altered a line in this drama after he had once written it down. He composed and corrected in his mind. I do not know how he meant to finish it; but he said himself that the whole conduct of the story was already conceived. It was at this time that a brutal paragraph\* alluding to his lameness appeared, which he repeated to me lest I should hear it from some one else. No action of Lord Byron's life—scarce a line he has written—but was influenced by his personal defect."]

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\* It is possible that Mrs. Shelley alludes to a sentence in the *Memoirs, etc., of Lord Byron* (by Dr. John Watkin), 1822, p. 46: "A malformation of one of his feet, and other indications of a rickety constitution, served as a plea for suffering him to range the hills and to wander about at his pleasure on the seashore, that his frame might be invigorated by air and exercise."







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70. 1840. 1840. 1840. 1840.

*Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley.*





## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



STRANGER, *afterwards* CÆSAR.

ARNOLD.

BOURBON.

PHILIBERT.

CELLINI.

BERTHA.

OLIMPIA.

*Spirits, Soldiers, Citizens of Rome, Priests,  
Peasants, etc.*

# THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED:<sup>i</sup>

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## PART I.

### SCENE I.—*A Forest.*

*Enter* ARNOLD and his mother BERTHA.

*Bert.* OUT, Hunchback !

*Arn.* I was born so, Mother !<sup>1</sup>

*Bert.* Out,  
Thou incubus ! Thou nightmare ! Of seven sons,

i. *The Deformed—a drama.*—*B. Pisa*, 1822.

1. [Moore (*Life*, p. 13) quotes these lines in connection with a passage in Byron's "Memoranda," where, in speaking of his own sensitiveness on the subject of his deformed foot, he described the feeling of horror and humiliation that came over him, when his mother, in one of her fits of passion, called him "*a lame brat* !" . . . "It may be questioned," he adds, "whether that whole drama [*The Deformed Transformed*] was not indebted for its origin to that single recollection."

Byron's early letters (e.g. November 2, 11, 17, 1804, *Letters*, 1898, i. 41, 45, 48) are full of complaints of his mother's "eccentric behaviour," her "fits of phrenzy," her "caprices," "passions," and so forth; and there is convincing proof—see *Life*, pp. 28, 306; *Letters*, 1898, ii. 122 (incident at Bellingham's execution); *Letters*, 1901, vi. 179 [*Le Diable Boiteux*])—that he regarded the contraction of the muscles of his legs as a more or less repulsive deformity. And yet, to quote one of a hundred testimonies,—“with regard to Lord Byron's features, Mr. Mathews observed, that he was the only man he ever contemplated, to whom he felt disposed to apply the word *beautiful*” (*Memoirs of Charles Mathews*, 1838, ii. 380). The looker-on or the consoler computes the magnitude and the liberality of the compensation. The sufferer thinks only of his sufferings.]



The sole abortion !

*Arn.* Would that I had been so,  
And never seen the light !

*Bert.* I would so, too !  
But as thou *hast*—hence, hence—and do thy best !  
That back of thine may bear its burthen ; 'tis  
More high, if not so broad as that of others.

*Arn.* It *bears* its burthen ;—but, my heart ! Will it  
Sustain that which you lay upon it, Mother ?  
I love, or, at the least, I loved you : nothing 10  
Save You, in nature, can love aught like me.  
You nursed me—do not kill me !

*Bert.* Yes—I nursed thee,  
Because thou wert my first-born, and I knew not  
If there would be another unlike thee,  
That monstrous sport of Nature. But get hence,  
And gather wood !<sup>1</sup>

*Arn.* I will : but when I bring it,  
Speak to me kindly. Though my brothers are  
So beautiful and lusty, and as free  
As the free chase they follow, do not spurn me :  
Our milk has been the same.

*Bert.* As is the hedgehog's, 20  
Which sucks at midnight from the wholesome dam  
Of the young bull, until the milkmaid finds  
The nipple, next day, sore, and udder dry.  
Call not thy brothers brethren ! Call me not  
Mother ; for if I brought thee forth, it was  
As foolish hens at times hatch vipers, by  
Sitting upon strange eggs. Out, urchin, out !

[*Exit BERTHA.*]

*Arn. (solus).* Oh, mother !—She is gone, and I  
must do  
Her bidding ;—wearily but willingly  
I would fulfil it, could I only hope 30  
A kind word in return. What shall I do ?

[*ARNOLD begins to cut wood : in doing this he wounds  
one of his hands.*]

My labour for the day is over now.  
Accurséd be this blood that flows so fast ;

1. [So, too, Prospero to Caliban, *Tempest*, act i. sc. 2, line 309, etc.]

For double curses will be my meed now  
 At home—What home? I have no home, no kin,  
 No kind—not made like other creatures, or  
 To share their sports or pleasures. Must I bleed, too,  
 Like them? Oh, that each drop which falls to earth  
 Would rise a snake to sting them, as they have stung  
 me!

Or that the Devil, to whom they liken me, 40  
 Would aid his likeness! If I must partake<sup>1</sup>  
 His form, why not his power? Is it because  
 I have not his will too? For one kind word  
 From her who bore me would still reconcile me  
 Even to this hateful aspect. Let me wash  
 The wound.

[ARNOLD goes to a spring, and stoops to wash his  
*hand: he starts back.*

They are right; and Nature's mirror shows me,  
 What she hath made me. I will not look on it  
 Again, and scarce dare think on't. Hideous wretch  
 That I am! The very waters mock me with 50  
 My horrid shadow—like a demon placed  
 Deep in the fountain to scare back the cattle  
 From drinking therein. [*He pauses.*

And shall I live on,  
 A burden to the earth, myself, and shame  
 Unto what brought me into life? Thou blood,  
 Which flowest so freely from a scratch, let me  
 Try if thou wilt not, in a fuller stream,  
 Pour forth my woes for ever with thyself  
 On earth, to which I will restore, at once,  
 This hateful compound of her atoms, and 60  
 Resolve back to her elements, and take  
 The shape of any reptile save myself,  
 And make a world for myriads of new worms!  
 This knife! now let me prove if it will sever  
 This withered slip of Nature's nightshade—my  
 Vile form—from the creation, as it hath

x. [Compare—

“Have not partook oppression.”

*Marino Faliero*, act i. sc. 2, line 468,  
*Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 362, note 1.]

The green bough from the forest.

[ARNOLD *places the knife in the ground, with the point upwards.*

Now 'tis set,

And I can fall upon it. Yet one glance  
On the fair day, which sees no foul thing like  
Myself, and the sweet sun which warmed me, but 70  
In vain. The birds—how joyously they sing!  
So let them, for I would not be lamented:  
But let their merriest notes be Arnold's knell;  
The fallen leaves my monument; the murmur  
Of the near fountain my sole elegy.  
Now, knife, stand firmly, as I fain would fall!

[*As he rushes to throw himself upon the knife, his eye is suddenly caught by the fountain, which seems in motion.*

The fountain moves without a wind: but shall  
The ripple of a spring change my resolve?  
No. Yet it moves again! The waters stir,  
Not as with air, but by some subterranean 80  
And rocking Power of the internal world.  
What's here? A mist! No more?—

[*A cloud comes from the fountain. He stands gazing upon it: it is dispelled, and a tall black man comes towards him.*<sup>1</sup>

Arn. What would you? Speak!

Spirit or man?

Stran. As man is both, why not

Say both in one?

Arn. Your form is man's, and yet

You may be devil.

Stran. So many men are that

Which is so called or thought, that you may add me

To which you please, without much wrong to either.

But come: you wish to kill yourself;—pursue

Your purpose.

Arn. You have interrupted me.

Stran. What is that resolution which can e'er 90

1. [Compare the story of the philosopher Jamblichus and the raising of Eros and Anteros from their "fountain-dwellings."—*Manfred*, act ii. sc. 2, line 93, *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 105, note 2.]

Be interrupted? If I be the devil  
 You deem, a single moment would have made you  
 Mine, and for ever, by your suicide;  
 And yet my coming saves you.

*Arn.* I said not  
 You *were* the Demon, but that your approach  
 Was like one.

*Stran.* Unless you keep company  
 With him (and you seem scarce used to such high  
 Society) you can't tell how he approaches;  
 And for his aspect, look upon the fountain,  
 And then on me, and judge which of us twain 100  
 Looks likest what the boors believe to be  
 Their cloven-footed terror.

*Arn.* Do you—dare *you*  
 To taunt me with my born deformity?

*Stran.* Were I to taunt a buffalo with this  
 Cloven foot of thine, or the swift dromedary  
 With thy Sublime of Humps, the animals  
 Would revel in the compliment. And yet  
 Both beings are more swift, more strong, more mighty  
 In action and endurance than thyself,  
 And all the fierce and fair of the same kind 110  
 With thee. Thy form is natural: 'twas only  
 Nature's mistaken largess to bestow  
 The gifts which are of others upon man.

*Arn.* Give me the strength then of the buffalo's foot,<sup>i</sup>  
 When he spurns high the dust, beholding his  
 Near enemy; or let me have the long  
 And patient swiftness of the desert-ship,  
 The helmless dromedary!—and I'll bear<sup>ii</sup>  
 Thy fiendish sarcasm with a saintly patience.

*Stran.* I will.

*Arn.* (*with surprise*). Thou *canst*?

*Stran.* Perhaps. Would you  
 aught else? 120

*Arn.* Thou mockest me.

*Stran.* Not I. Why should I mock  
 What all are mocking? That's poor sport, methinks.

- i. Give me the strength of the buffalo's foot (which marks me).—[MS.]  
 ii. The sailless dromedary —.—[MS.]

To talk to thee in human language (for  
 Thou canst not yet speak mine), the forester  
 Hunts not the wretched coney, but the boar,  
 Or wolf, or lion—leaving paltry game  
 To petty burghers, who leave once a year  
 Their walls, to fill their household cauldrons with  
 Such scullion prey. The meanest gibe at thee,—  
 Now *I* can mock the mightiest.<sup>1</sup>

*Arn.*

Then waste not 130

Thy time on me: I seek thee not.

*Stran.*

Your thoughts

Are not far from me. Do not send me back:

I'm not so easily recalled to do

Good service.

*Arn.*

What wilt thou do for me?

*Stran.*

Change

Shapes with you, if you will, since yours so irks you;  
 Or form you to your wish in any shape.

*Arn.* Oh! then you are indeed the Demon, for  
 Nought else would wittingly wear mine.

*Stran.*

I'll show thee

The brightest which the world e'er bore, and give thee  
 Thy choice.

*Arn.*

On what condition?

*Stran.*

There's a question!

An hour ago you would have given your soul 141

To look like other men, and now you pause

To wear the form of heroes.

*Arn.*

No; I will not.

I must not compromise my soul.

*Stran.*

What soul,

Worth naming so, would dwell in such a carcase?

*Arn.* 'Tis an aspiring one, whate'er the tenement  
 In which it is misloded. But name your compact:  
 Must it be signed in blood?

*Stran.*

Not in your own.

*Arn.* Whose blood then?

*Stran.*

We will talk of that hereafter.

But I'll be moderate with you, for I see 150

Great things within you. You shall have no bond

i. Now I can gibe the mightiest.—[MS.]

But your own will, no contract save your deeds.  
Are you content?

*Arn.* I take thee at thy word.

*Stran.* Now then!—

[*The Stranger approaches the fountain, and turns to*  
*ARNOLD.*

A little of your blood.<sup>1</sup>

*Arn.* For what?

*Stran.* To mingle with the magic of the waters,  
And make the charm effective.

*Arn.* (*holding out his wounded arm*). Take it all.

*Stran.* Not now. A few drops will suffice for this.

[*The Stranger takes some of ARNOLD'S blood in his*  
*hand, and casts it into the fountain.*

Shadows of Beauty!

Shadows of Power!

Rise to your duty—

160

This is the hour!

Walk lovely and pliant<sup>1</sup>

From the depth of this fountain,

As the cloud-shapen giant

Bestrides the Hartz Mountain.<sup>2</sup>

Come as ye were,

That our eyes may behold

The model in air

Of the form I will mould,

Bright as the Iris

170

When ether is spanned;—

Such *his* desire is, [*Pointing to ARNOLD.*

Such *my* command!<sup>ii</sup>

Demons heroic—

Demons who wore

The form of the Stoic

Or sophist of yore—

i. *Walk lively and pliant.*

*You shall rise up as pliant.*—[*MS. erased.*]

ii. *And such my command.*—[*MS.*]

1. [So, too, in *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* (Marlowe's *Works*, 1858, p. 112), Faustus stabs his arm, "and with his proper blood Assures his soul to be great Lucifer's."]

2. This is a well-known German superstition—a gigantic shadow produced by reflection on the Brocken. [See Brewster's *Letters on Natural Magic*, 1831, p. 128.]

Or the shape of each victor—  
 From Macedon's boy,  
 To each high Roman's picture, 180  
 Who breathed to destroy—  
 Shadows of Beauty!  
 Shadows of Power!  
 Up to your duty—  
 This is the hour!

[*Various phantoms arise from the waters, and pass in succession before the Stranger and ARNOLD.*]

Arn. What do I see?

Stran. The black-eyed Roman,<sup>1</sup> with  
 The eagle's beak between those eyes which ne'er  
 Beheld a conqueror, or looked along  
 The land he made not Rome's, while Rome became  
 His, and all theirs who heired his very name. 190

Arn. The phantom's bald; my quest is beauty.  
 Could I

Inherit but his fame with his defects!

Stran. His brow was girt with laurels more than hairs.<sup>2</sup>  
 You see his aspect—choose it, or reject.  
 I can but promise you his form; his fame  
 Must be long sought and fought for.

Arn. I will fight, too,  
 But not as a mock Cæsar. Let him pass:  
 His aspect may be fair, but suits me not.

Stran. Then you are far more difficult to please  
 Than Cato's sister, or than Brutus's mother, 200  
 Or Cleopatra at sixteen<sup>3</sup>—an age  
 When love is not less in the eye than heart.  
 But be it so! Shadow, pass on!

[*The phantom of Julius Cæsar disappears.*]

Arn. And can it  
 Be, that the man who shook the earth is gone,<sup>4</sup>

i. *And can  
 It be? the man who shook the earth is gone.*—[MS.]

1. ["Nigris vegetisque oculis."—Suetonius, *Vitæ C. Julius Cæsar*, cap. xlv., *Opera Omnia*, 1826, i. 105.]

2. [*Vide post*, p. 501, note 1.]

3. ["Sed ante alias [Julius Cæsar] dilexit M. Bruti matrem Serviliam . . . dilexit et reginas . . . sed maxime Cleopatram" (*ibid.*, i. 113, 115). Cleopatra, born B.C. 69, was twenty-one years old when she met Cæsar, B.C. 48.]

And left no footstep?

*Stran.* There you err. His substance  
Left graves enough, and woes enough, and fame  
More than enough to track his memory;  
But for his shadow—'tis no more than yours,  
Except a little longer and less crooked  
I' the sun. Behold another! [*A second phantom passes.*

*Arn.* Who is he? 210

*Stran.* He was the fairest and the bravest of  
Athenians.<sup>1</sup> Look upon him well.

*Arn.* He is  
More lovely than the last. How beautiful!

*Stran.* Such was the curled son of Clinias;—wouldst  
thou  
Invest thee with his form?

*Arn.* Would that I had  
Been born with it! But since I may choose further,  
I will look further. [*The shade of Alcibiades disappears.*

*Stran.* Lo! behold again!

*Arn.* What! that low, swarthy, short-nosed, round-  
eyed satyr,  
With the wide nostrils and Silenus' aspect,  
The splay feet and low stature!<sup>2</sup> I had better 220  
Remain that which I am.

*Stran.* And yet he was  
The earth's perfection of all mental beauty,  
And personification of all virtue.  
But you reject him?

*Arn.* If his form could bring me  
That which redeemed it—no.

*Stran.* I have no power  
To promise that; but you may try, and find it  
Easier in such a form—or in your own.

1. ["Upon the whole, it may be doubted whether there be a name of Antiquity which comes down with such a general charm as that of *Alcibiades*. Why? I cannot answer: who can?"—*Detached Thoughts* (1821), No. 108, *Letters*, 1901, v. 461. For Sir Walter Scott's note on this passage, see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 77, 78, note 2.]

2. [The outside of Socrates was that of a satyr and buffoon, but his soul was all virtue, and from within him came such divine and pathetic things, as pierced the heart, and drew tears from the hearers.—Plato, *Symp.*, p. 216, D.]



*Arn.* No. I was not born for philosophy,  
Though I have that about me which has need on't.  
Let him fleet on.

*Stran.* Be air, thou Hemlock-drinker! 230

[*The shadow of Socrates disappears : another rises.*

*Arn.* What's here? whose broad brow and whose curly  
beard

And manly aspect look like Hercules,<sup>1</sup>  
Save that his jocund eye hath more of Bacchus  
Than the sad purger of the infernal world,  
Leaning dejected on his club of conquest,<sup>2</sup>  
As if he knew the worthlessness of those  
For whom he had fought.

*Stran.* It was the man who lost  
The ancient world for love.

*Arn.* I cannot blame him,  
Since I have risked my soul because I find not  
That which he exchanged the earth for.

*Stran.* Since so far  
You seem congenial, will you wear his features? 241

*Arn.* No. As you leave me choice, I am difficult.  
If but to see the heroes I should ne'er  
Have seen else, on this side of the dim shore,  
Whence they float back before us.

*Stran.* Hence, Triumvir,  
Thy Cleopatra's waiting.

[*The shade of Antony disappears : another rises.*

*Arn.* Who is this?  
Who truly looketh like a demigod,  
Blooming and bright, with golden hair, and stature,  
If not more high than mortal, yet immortal  
In all that nameless bearing of his limbs, 250  
Which he wears as the Sun his rays—a something  
Which shines from him, and yet is but the flashing  
Emanation of a thing more glorious still.  
Was he *d'er* human only? <sup>3</sup>

1. ["Anthony had a noble dignity of countenance, a graceful length of beard, a large forehead, an aquiline nose : and, upon the whole, the same manly aspect that we see in the pictures and statues of Hercules." —Plutarch's *Lives*, Langhorne's Translation, 1838, p. 634.]

2. [As in the "Farnese" Hercules.]

3. [The beauty and mien [of Demetrius Poliorcetes] were so inimitable

*Stran.* Let the earth speak,  
If there be atoms of him left, or even  
Of the more solid gold that formed his urn.

*Arn.* Who was this glory of mankind ?

*Stran.* The shame  
Of Greece in peace, her thunderbolt in war—  
Demetrius the Macedonian, and  
Taker of cities.

*Arn.* Yet one shadow more. 260

*Stran.* (*addressing the shadow*). Get thee to Lamia's  
lap !

[*The shade of Demetrius Poliorcetes vanishes : another  
rises.*

I'll fit you still,  
Fear not, my Hunchback : if the shadows of  
That which existed please not your nice taste,  
I'll animate the ideal marble, till  
Your soul be reconciled to her new garment.

*Arn.* Content ! I will fix here.

*Stran.* I must commend  
Your choice. The godlike son of the sea-goddess,  
The unshorn boy of Peleus, with his locks  
As beautiful and clear as the amber waves  
Of rich Pactolus, rolled o'er sands of gold, 270  
Softened by intervening crystal, and  
Rippled like flowing waters by the wind,

that no statuary or painter could hit off a likeness. His countenance had a mixture of grace and dignity ; and was at once amiable and awful ; and the unsubdued and eager air of youth was blended with the majesty of the hero and the king.—Plutarch's *Lives*, Langhorne's Translation, 1838, p. 616.

Demetrius the Besieger rescued Greece from the sway of Ptolemy and Cassander, B.C. 307. He passed the following winter at Athens, where divine honours were paid to him under the title of "the Preserver" (*ὁ Σωτήρ*). He was "the shame of Greece in peace," by reason of his profligacy—"the citadel was so polluted with his debaucheries, that it appeared to be kept sacred in some degree when he indulged himself only with such *Hetaerae* as Chrysis, Lamia, Demo, and Anticyra." He was the unspiritual ancestor of Charles the Second. Once when his father, Antigonos, had been told that he was indisposed, "he went to see him ; and when he came to the door, he met one of his favourites going out. He went in, however, and, sitting down by him, took hold of his hand. 'My fever,' said Demetrius, 'has left me.' 'I knew it,' said Antigonos, 'for I met it this moment at the door.'"—Plutarch's *Lives*, *ibid.*, pp. 621-623.]

All vowed to Sperchius<sup>1</sup> as they were—behold them !  
 And *him*—as he stood by Polixena,  
 With sanctioned and with softened love, before  
 The altar, gazing on his Trojan bride,  
 With some remorse within for Hector slain  
 And Priam weeping, mingled with deep passion  
 For the sweet downcast virgin, whose young hand  
 Trembled in *his* who slew her brother. So 280  
 He stood i' the temple ! Look upon him as  
 Greece looked her last upon her best, the instant  
 Ere Paris' arrow flew.

*Arn.* I gaze upon him  
 As if I were his soul, whose form shall soon  
 Envelope mine.

*Stran.* You have done well. The greatest  
 Deformity should only barter with  
 The extremest beauty—if the proverb's true  
 Of mortals, that Extremes meet.

*Arn.* Come ! Be quick !  
 I am impatient.

*Stran.* As a youthful beauty  
 Before her glass. *You both* see what is not, 290  
 But dream it is what must be.

*Arn.* Must I wait ?  
*Stran.* No ; that were a pity. But a word or two :  
 His stature is twelve cubits ; would you so far  
 Outstep these times, and be a Titan ? Or  
 (To talk canonically) wax a son  
 Of Anak ?

*Arn.* Why not ?  
*Stran.* Glorious ambition !  
 I love thee most in dwarfs ! A mortal of  
 Philistine stature would have gladly pared  
 His own Goliath down to a slight David :  
 But thou, my manikin, wouldst soar a show 300  
 Rather than hero. Thou shalt be indulged,

1. [Spercheus was a river-god, the husband of Polydora, the daughter of Peleus. Peleus casts into the river the hair of his son Achilles, in the pious hope that his son-in-law would accept the votive offering, and grant the youth a safe return from the Trojan war. See *Iliad*, xxiii. 140, *sqq.*]

If such be thy desire ; and, yet, by being  
 A little less removed from present men  
 In figure, thou canst sway them more ; for all  
 Would rise against thee now, as if to hunt  
 A new-found Mammoth ; and their curséd engines,  
 Their culverins, and so forth, would find way  
 Through our friend's armour there, with greater ease  
 Than the Adulterer's arrow through his heel  
 Which Thetis had forgotten to baptize 310  
 In Styx.

*Arn.* Then let it be as thou deem'st best.

*Stran.* Thou shalt be beauteous as the thing thou seest,  
 And strong as what it was, and——

*Arn.* I ask not  
 For Valour, since Deformity is daring.<sup>1</sup>  
 It is its essence to o'ertake mankind  
 By heart and soul, and make itself the equal—  
 Aye, the superior of the rest. There is  
 A spur in its halt movements, to become  
 All that the others cannot, in such things  
 As still are free to both, to compensate 320  
 For stepdame Nature's avarice at first.  
 They woo with fearless deeds the smiles of fortune,  
 And oft, like Timour the lame Tartar,<sup>2</sup> win them.

*Stran.* Well spoken ! And thou doubtless wilt remain  
 Formed as thou art. I may dismiss the mould  
 Of shadow, which must turn to flesh, to incase  
 This daring soul, which could achieve no less  
 Without it.

1. ["Whosoever," says Bacon, "hath anything fixed in his person that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn ; therefore, all deformed persons are extreme bold ; first, as in their own defence, as being exposed to scorn, but in process of time by a general habit ; also it stirreth in them industry, and especially of this kind, to watch and observe the weakness of others, that they may have somewhat to repay" (Essay xlv.). Byron's "chief incentive, when a boy, to distinction was that mark of deformity on his person, by an acute sense of which he was first stung into the ambition of being great."—*Life*, p. 306.]

2. [Timúr Bey, or Timúr Lang, i.e. "the lame Timúr" (A.D. 1336–1405), was the founder of the Mogul dynasty. He was the Tamerlane of history and of legend. Byron had certainly read the selections from Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great*, in Lamb's *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*.]

*Arn.* Had no power presented me  
The possibility of change, I would  
Have done the best which spirit may to make 330  
Its way with all Deformity's dull, deady,  
Discouraging weight upon me, like a mountain,  
In feeling, on my heart as on my shoulders—  
A hateful and unsightly molehill to  
The eyes of happier men. I would have looked  
On Beauty in that sex which is the type  
Of all we know or dream of beautiful,  
Beyond the world they brighten, with a sigh—  
Not of love, but despair; nor sought to win,  
Though to a heart all love, what could not love me 340  
In turn, because of this vile crookéd clog,  
Which makes me lonely. Nay, I could have borne  
It all, had not my mother spurned me from her.  
The she-bear licks her cubs into a sort  
Of shape;—my Dam beheld my shape was hopeless.  
Had she exposed me, like the Spartan, ere  
I knew the passionate part of life, I had  
Been a clod of the valley,—happier nothing  
Than what I am. But even thus—the lowest,  
Ugliest, and meanest of mankind—what courage 350  
And perseverance could have done, perchance  
Had made me something—as it has made heroes  
Of the same mould as mine. You lately saw me  
Master of my own life, and quick to quit it;  
And he who is so is the master of  
Whatever dreads to die.

*Stran.* Decide between  
What you have been, or will be.

*Arn.* I have done so.  
You have opened brighter prospects to my eyes,  
And sweeter to my heart. As I am now,  
I might be feared—admired—respected—loved 360  
Of all save those next to me, of whom I  
Would be belovéd. As thou showest me  
A choice of forms, I take the one I view.  
Haste! haste!

*Stran.* And what shall I wear?

*Arn.*

Surely, he

Who can command all forms will choose the highest,  
 Something superior even to that which was  
 Pelides now before us. Perhaps *his*  
 Who slew him, that of Paris : or—still higher—  
 The Poet's God, clothed in such limbs as are  
 Themselves a poetry.

*Stran.* Less will content me ; 370  
 For I, too, love a change.

*Arn.* Your aspect is  
 Dusky, but not uncomely.<sup>1</sup>

*Stran.* If I chose,  
 I might be whiter ; but I have a *penchant*  
 For black—it is so honest, and, besides,  
 Can neither blush with shame nor pale with fear ;  
 But I have worn it long enough of late,  
 And now I'll take your figure.

*Arn.* Mine !

*Stran.* Yes. You  
 Shall change with Thetis' son, and I with Bertha,  
 Your mother's offspring. People have their tastes ;  
 You have yours—I mine.

*Arn.* Despatch ! despatch !

*Stran.* Even so.

[*The Stranger takes some earth and moulds it along  
 the turf, and then addresses the phantom of  
 Achilles.*

Beautiful shadow 381

Of Thetis's boy !

Who sleeps in the meadow

Whose grass grows o'er Troy :

From the red earth, like Adam,<sup>2</sup>

Thy likeness I shape,

As the Being who made him,

Whose actions I ape.

Thou Clay, be all glowing,

Till the Rose in his cheek

Be as fair as, when blowing,

It wears its first streak !

390

1. ["I am black, but comely."—*Song of Solomon* i. 5.]

2. Adam means "*red earth*," from which the first man was formed.  
 [The word '*ādām*' is said to be analogous to the Assyrian *admu*,  
 "child"—*i.e.* "one made" by God.—*Encycl. Bibl.*, art. "Adam."]

Ye Violets, I scatter,  
 Now turn into eyes !  
 And thou, sunshiny Water,  
 Of blood take the guise !  
 Let these Hyacinth boughs  
 Be his long flowing hair,  
 And wave o'er his brows,  
 As thou wavest in air !  
 Let his heart be this marble  
 I tear from the rock !  
 But his voice as the warble  
 Of birds on yon oak !  
 Let his flesh be the purest  
 Of mould, in which grew  
 The Lily-root surest,  
 And drank the best dew !  
 Let his limbs be the lightest  
 Which clay can compound,  
 And his aspect the brightest  
 On earth to be found !  
 Elements, near me,  
 Be mingled and stirred,  
 Know me, and hear me,  
 And leap to my word !  
 Sunbeams, awaken  
 This earth's animation !<sup>i</sup>  
 'Tis done ! He hath taken  
 His stand in creation !

400

410

420

[ARNOLD falls senseless ; his soul passes into the shape  
 of Achilles, which rises from the ground ; while  
 the phantom has disappeared, part by part, as the  
 figure was formed from the earth.

Arn. (in his new form). I love, and I shall be beloved !  
 Oh, life !

At last I feel thee ! Glorious Spirit !

Stran.

Stop !

What shall become of your abandoned garment,  
 Yon hump, and lump, and clod of ugliness,  
 Which late you wore, or were ?

Arn.

Who cares ? Let wolves

i. *This shape into Life.*—[MS.]

And vultures take it, if they will.

*Stran.* And if  
They do, and are not scared by it, you'll say  
It must be peace-time, and no better fare  
Abroad i' the fields.

*Arn.* Let us but leave it there ;  
No matter what becomes on't.

*Stran.* That's ungracious ; 430  
If not ungrateful. Whatsoe'er it be,  
It hath sustained your soul full many a day.

*Arn.* Aye, as the dunghill may conceal a gem  
Which is now set in gold, as jewels should be.

*Stran.* But if I give another form, it must be  
By fair exchange, not robbery. For they<sup>1</sup>  
Who make men without women's aid have long  
Had patents for the same, and do not love  
Your Interlopers. The Devil may take men,<sup>1</sup>  
Not make them,—though he reap the benefit 440  
Of the original workmanship :—and therefore  
Some one must be found to assume the shape  
You have quitted.

*Arn.* Who would do so ?

*Stran.* That I know not,  
And therefore I must.

*Arn.* You !

*Stran.* I said it ere  
You inhabited your present dome of beauty.

*Arn.* True. I forget all things in the new joy  
Of this immortal change.

*Stran.* In a few moments  
I will be as you were, and you shall see

i. *Your Interloper* —.—[*MS.*]

1. [The reference is to the *homunculi* of the alchymists. See Retzsch's illustrations to Goethe's *Faust*, 1834, plates 3, 4, 5. Compare, too, *The Second Part of Faust*, act ii.—

“The glass rings low, the charming power that lives  
Within it makes the music that it gives,  
It dims ! it brightens ! it will shape itself.  
And see ! a graceful dazzling little elf.  
He lives ! he moves ! spruce mannikin of fire,  
What more can we ? what more can earth desire ? ”

Anster's Translation, 1886, p. 91.]



Yourself for ever by you, as your shadow.

*Arn.* I would be spared this.

*Stran.* But it cannot be. 450

What! shrink already, being what you are,

From seeing what you were?

*Arn.* Do as thou wilt.

*Stran.* (*to the late form of ARNOLD, extended on the earth*).

Clay! not dead; but soul-less!

Though no man would choose thee,

An Immortal no less

Deigns not to refuse thee.

Clay thou art; and unto spirit

All clay is of equal merit.

Fire! *without* which nought can live;

Fire! but *in* which nought can live, 460

Save the fabled salamander,

Or immortal souls, which wander,

Praying what doth not forgive,

Howling for a drop of water,

Burning in a quenchless lot:

Fire! the only element

Where nor fish, beast, bird, nor worm,

Save the Worm which dieth not,

Can preserve a moment's form,

But must with thyself be blent: 470

Fire! man's safeguard and his slaughter:

Fire! Creation's first-born Daughter,

And Destruction's threatened Son,

When Heaven with the world hath done:

Fire! assist me to renew

Life in what lies in my view

Stiff and cold!

His resurrection rests with me and you!

One little, marshy spark of flame—<sup>1</sup>

And he again shall seem the same; 480

But I his Spirit's place shall hold!

1. [Compare *Prisoner of Chillon*, stanza ii. line 35, *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 15, note 1. Compare, too, the dialogue between Mephistopheles and the Will-o'-the-Wisp, in the scene on the Hartz Mountains, in *Faust*, Part I. (see Anster's Translation, 1886, p. 271).]

[*An ignis-fatuus flits through the wood and rests on the brow of the body. The Stranger disappears: the body rises.*

*Arn.* (*in his new form*). Oh ! horrible !

*Stran.* (*in ARNOLD'S late shape*). What ! tremblest thou ?

*Arn.* Not so—

I merely shudder. Where is fled the shape  
Thou lately worest ?

*Stran.* To the world of shadows.

But let us thread the present. Whither wilt thou ?

*Arn.* Must thou be my companion ?

*Stran.* Wherefore not ?

Your betters keep worse company.

*Arn.* My betters !

*Stran.* Oh ! you wax proud, I see, of your new form :  
I'm glad of that. Ungrateful too ! That 's well ;  
You improve apace ;—two changes in an instant, 490  
And you are old in the World's ways already.  
But bear with me : indeed you'll find me useful  
Upon your pilgrimage. But come, pronounce  
Where shall we now be errant ?

*Arn.* Where the World

Is thickest, that I may behold it in  
Its workings.

*Stran.* That 's to say, where there is War

And Woman in activity. Let's see !

Spain—Italy—the new Atlantic world—<sup>1</sup>

Afric with all its Moors. In very truth,  
There is small choice : the whole race are just now 500  
Tugging as usual at each other's hearts.

*Arn.* I have heard great things of Rome.

*Stran.* A goodly choice—

And scarce a better to be found on earth,  
Since Sodom was put out. The field is wide too ;  
For now the Frank, and Hun, and Spanish scion  
Of the old Vandals, are at play along

1. [The immediate reference is to the composite forces, German, French, and Spanish, of the Imperial Army under the command of Charles de Bourbon ; but there is in lines 498-507 a manifest allusion to the revolutionary movements in South America, Italy, and Spain, which were at their height in 1822. (See the *Age of Bronze*, section vi. lines 260, *sq.*, *post*, pp. 555-557.)]

The sunny shores of the World's garden.

*Arn.*

How

Shall we proceed?

*Stran.*

Like gallants, on good coursers.

What, ho! my chargers! Never yet were better,

Since Phaeton was upset into the Po.<sup>1</sup>

510

Our pages too!

*Enter two Pages, with four coal-black horses.*

*Arn.*

A noble sight!

*Stran.*

And of

A nobler breed. Match me in Barbary,

Or your Kochlini race of Araby,<sup>1 2</sup>

With these!

*Arn.*

The mighty steam, which volumes high

From their proud nostrils, burns the very air;

And sparks of flame, like dancing fire-flies wheel

Around their manes, as common insects swarm

Round common steeds towards sunset.

*Stran.*

Mount, my lord:

They and I are your servitors.

*Arn.*

And these

Our dark-eyed pages—what may be their names? 520

*Stran.* You shall baptize them.

*Arn.*

What! in holy water?

*Stran.* Why not? The deeper sinner, better saint.

*Arn.* They are beautiful, and cannot, sure, be demons.

*Stran.* True; the devil's always ugly: and your beauty  
Is never diabolical.

*Arn.*

I'll call him

Who bears the golden horn, and wears such bright

And blooming aspect, *Huon*; <sup>3</sup> for he looks

i. *Kochlini* —.—[MS.]

1. [See Euripides, *Hippolytus*, line 733.]

2. [Kochlini horses were bred in a central province of Arabia.]

3. [Byron's knowledge of Huon of Bordeaux was, most probably, derived from Sotheby's *Oberon*; or, *Huon de Bourdeaux: A Mask*, published in 1802. For *The Boko of Duke Huon of Burdeaux*, done into English by Sir John Bouchier, Lord Berners, see the reprint issued by the Early English Text Society (E.S., No. xliii. 1884); and for *Analyse de Huon de Bordeaux, etc.*, see *Les Épopées Françaises*, by Léon Gautier, 1880, ii. 719-773.]

Like to the lovely boy lost in the forest,  
 And never found till now. And for the other  
 And darker, and more thoughtful, who smiles not, 530  
 But looks as serious though serene as night,  
 He shall be *Memnon*,<sup>1</sup> from the Ethiop king  
 Whose statue turns a harper once a day.  
 And you?

*Stran.* I have ten thousand names, and twice  
 As many attributes; but as I wear  
 A human shape, will take a human name.

*Arn.* More human than the shape (though it was mine  
 once)  
 I trust.

*Stran.* Then call me Cæsar.

*Arn.* Why, that name  
 Belongs to Empire, and has been but borne  
 By the World's lords.

*Stran.* And therefore fittest for 540  
 The Devil in disguise—since so you deem me,  
 Unless you call me Pope instead.

*Arn.* Well, then,  
 Cæsar thou shalt be. For myself, my name  
 Shall be plain Arnold still.

*Cæs.* We'll add a title—<sup>1</sup>  
 "Count Arnold:" it hath no ungracious sound,  
 And will look well upon a billet-doux.

*Arn.* Or in an order for a battle-field.

*Cæs. (sings).* To horse! to horse! my coal-black steed  
 Paws the ground and snuffs the air!

There's not a foal of Arab's breed 550  
 More knows whom he must bear;

i. *We'll add a "Count" to it.*—[MS.]

1. [The so-called statue of Memnon, the beautiful son of Tithonus and Eos (Dawn), is now known to be that of Amenhotep III., who reigned in the eighteenth dynasty, about 1430 B.C. Strabo, ed. 1807, p. 1155, was the first to record the musical note which sounded from the statue when it was touched by the rays of the rising sun. It used to be argued (see Gifford's note to *Don Juan*, Canto XIII. stanza lxiv. line 3, ed. 1837, p. 731) that the sounds were produced by a trick, but of late years it has been maintained that the Memnon's wail was due to natural causes, the pressure of suddenly-warmed currents of air through the pores and crevices of the stone. After the statue was restored, the phenomenon ceased. (See *La statue vocale de Memnon*, par J. A. Letronne, Paris, 1833, pp. 55, 56.)]

On the hill he will not tire,  
 Swifter as it waxes higher ;  
 In the marsh he will not slacken,  
 On the plain be overtaken ;  
 In the wave he will not sink,  
 Nor pause at the brook's side to drink ;  
 In the race he will not pant,  
 In the combat he'll not faint ;  
 On the stones he will not stumble, 560  
 Time nor toil shall make him humble ;  
 In the stall he will not stiffen,  
 But be wingèd as a Griffin,  
 Only flying with his feet :  
 And will not such a voyage be sweet ?  
 Merrily ! merrily ! never unsound,  
 Shall our bonny black horses skim over the ground !  
 From the Alps to the Caucasus, ride we, or fly !  
 For we'll leave them behind in the glance of an eye.  
*[They mount their horses, and disappear.]*

SCENE II.—*A Camp before the walls of Rome.*

ARNOLD and CÆSAR.

Cæs. You are well entered now.

Arn. Aye ; but my path  
 Has been o'er carcasses : mine eyes are full<sup>i</sup>  
 Of blood.

Cæs. Then wipe them, and see clearly. Why !  
 Thou art a conqueror ; the chosen knight  
 And free companion of the gallant Bourbon,  
 Late constable of France ;<sup>1</sup> and now to be

i. — *my eyes are full.*—[MS.]

1. [Charles de Bourbon, Comte de Montpensier et de la Marche, Dauphin d'Auvergne, was born February 17, 1490. He served in Italy with Bayard, and helped to decide the victory of Agnadello (A.D. 1510). He was appointed Constable of France by Francis I., January, 1515, and fought at the battle of Marignano, September 13, 1515. Not long afterwards he lost the king's favour, who was set against him by his mother, Louise de Savoie ; was recalled from his command in Italy, and superseded by Odet de Foix, brother of the king's mistress. It

Lord of the city which hath been Earth's Lord  
Under its emperors, and—changing sex,  
Not sceptre, an Hermaphrodite of Empire—  
*Lady of the old world.*<sup>1</sup>

*Arn.* How *old*? What! are there 10  
*New* worlds?

*Cæs.* To *you*. You'll find there are such shortly,  
By its rich harvests, new disease, and gold;  
From one *half* of the world named a *whole* new one,  
Because you know no better than the dull  
And dubious notice of your eyes and ears.

*Arn.* I'll trust them.

*Cæs.* Do! They will deceive you sweetly,  
And that is better than the bitter truth.

*Arn.* Dog!

*Cæs.* Man!

*Arn.* Devil!

was not, however, till he became a widower (Susanne, Duchesse de Bourbon, died April 28, 1521) that he finally broke with Francis and attached himself to the Emperor Charles V. *Madame*, the king's mother, not only coveted the vast estates of the house of Bourbon, but was enamoured of the Constable's person, and, so to speak, gave him his choice between marriage and a suit for his fiefs. Charles would have nothing to say to the lady's proposals or to her son's entreaties, and seeing that rejection meant ruin, he "entered into a correspondence with the Emperor and the King [Henry VIII.] of England . . . and, finding this discovered, went into the Emperor's service."

After various and varying successes, both in the South of France and in Lombardy, he found himself, in the spring of 1527, not so much the commander-in-chief as the popular *capo* of a mixed body of German, Spanish, and Italian *condottieri*, unpaid and ill-disciplined, who had mutinied more than once, who could only be kept together by the prospect of unlimited booty, and a timely concession to their demands. "To Rome! to Rome!" cried the hungry and tumultuous *landsnechts*, and on May 5, 1527, the "late Constable of France," at the head of an army of 30,000 troops, appeared before the walls of the sacred city. On the morning of the 6th of May, he was killed by a shot from an arquebuse. His epitaph recounts his honours: "Aucto Imperio, Gallo victo, Superatâ Italiâ, Pontifice obsessa, Româ captâ, Borbonius, Hic Jacet;" but in Paris they painted the sill of his gate-way yellow, because he was a renegade and a traitor. He could not have said, with the dying Bayard, "Ne me plaignez pas—je meurs sans avoir servi contre *ma patrie, mon roy, et mon serment*." (See *Modern Universal History*, 1760, xxiv. 150-152, Note C; *Nouvelle Biographie Universelle*, art. "Bourbon.")]

1. [The contrast is between imperial Rome, the Lord of the world, and papal Rome, "the great harlot which did corrupt the earth with her fornication" (*Rev.* xix. 2). Compare Part II. sc. iii. line 26, *vide post*, p. 521.]

*Cæs.* Your obedient humble servant.

*Arn.* Say *master* rather. Thou hast lured me on,  
Through scenes of blood and lust, till I am here. 20

*Cæs.* And where wouldst thou be ?

*Arn.* Oh, *at peace—in peace!*

*Cæs.* And where is that which is so? From the star  
To the winding worm, all life is motion ; and  
In life *commotion* is the extremest point  
Of life. The planet wheels till it becomes  
A comet, and destroying as it sweeps  
The stars, goes out. The poor worm winds its way,  
Living upon the death of other things,  
But still, like them, must live and die, the subject  
Of something which has made it live and die. 30  
You must obey what all obey, the rule  
Of fixed Necessity : against her edict  
Rebellion prospers not.

*Arn.* And when it prospers——

*Cæs.* 'Tis no rebellion.

*Arn.* Will it prosper now ?

*Cæs.* The Bourbon hath given orders for the assault,  
And by the dawn there will be work.

*Arn.* Alas !

And shall the city yield? I see the giant  
Abode of the true God, and his true saint,  
Saint Peter, rear its dome and cross into  
That sky whence Christ ascended from the cross, 40  
Which his blood made a badge of glory and  
Of joy (as once of torture unto him),—  
God and God's Son, man's sole and only refuge !

*Cæs.* 'Tis there, and shall be.

*Arn.* What ?

*Cæs.* The Crucifix

Above, and many altar shrines below.  
Also some culverins upon the walls,  
And harquebusses, and what not ; besides  
The men who are to kindle them to death  
Of other men.

*Arn.* And those scarce mortal arches,<sup>1</sup>

1. [Compare *Manfred*, act iii. sc. 4, line 10 ; and *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza cxxviii. line 1 ; *Poetical Works*, 1901, iv. 131, 1899, ii. 423, note 2.]

Pile above pile of everlasting wall, 50  
 The theatre where Emperors and their subjects  
 (Those subjects *Romans*) stood at gaze upon  
 The battles of the monarchs of the wild  
 And wood—the lion and his tusky rebels  
 Of the then untamed desert, brought to joust  
 In the arena—as right well they might,  
 When they had left no human foe unconquered—  
 Made even the forest pay its tribute of  
 Life to their amphitheatre, as well  
 As Dacia men to die the eternal death 60  
 For a sole instant's pastime, and "Pass on  
 To a new gladiator!"—Must it fall?

*Cæs.* The city, or the amphitheatre?  
 The church, or one, or all? for you confound  
 Both them and me.

*Arn.* To-morrow sounds the assault  
 With the first cock-crow.

*Cæs.* Which, if it end with  
 The evening's first nightingale, will be  
 Something new in the annals of great sieges;  
 For men must have their prey after long toil.

*Arn.* The sun goes down as calmly, and perhaps 70  
 More beautifully, than he did on Rome  
 On the day Remus leapt her wall.

*Cæs.* I saw him.

*Arn.* You!

*Cæs.* Yes, Sir! You forget I am or was  
 Spirit, till I took up with your cast shape,  
 And a worse name. I'm Cæsar and a hunch-back  
 Now. Well! the first of Cæsars was a bald-head;  
 And loved his laurels better as a wig  
 (So history says) than as a glory.<sup>1</sup> Thus  
 The world runs on, but we'll be merry still.  
 I saw your Romulus (simple as I am) 80  
 Slay his own twin, quick-born of the same womb,  
 Because he leapt a ditch ('twas then no wall,

1. ["Calvitii vero deformitatem iniquissime ferret, sæpe obtrectatorum  
 jocis obnoxiam expertus. Ideoque et deficientem capillum revocare  
 a vertice assuerat, et ex omnibus decretis sibi a Senatu populoque  
 honoribus non aliud aut recepit aut usurpavit libentius, quam jus laureæ  
 coronæ perpetuo gestandæ."—Suetonius, *Opera Omnia*, 1826, i. 105,  
 106.]



Whate'er it now be) ; and Rome's earliest cement  
Was brother's blood ; and if its native blood  
Be spilt till the choked Tiber be as red  
As e'er 'twas yellow, it will never wear  
The deep hue of the Ocean and the Earth,  
Which the great robber sons of fratricide  
Have made their never-ceasing scene of slaughter,  
For ages.

*Arn.* But what have these done, their far 90  
Remote descendants, who have lived in peace,  
The peace of Heaven, and in her sunshine of  
Piety?

*Cas.* And what had *they* done, whom the old  
Romans o'erswept?—Hark !

*Arn.* They are soldiers singing  
A reckless roundelay, upon the eve  
Of many deaths, it may be of their own.

*Cas.* And why should they not sing as well as swans?  
They are black ones, to be sure.

*Arn.* So, you are learned,  
I see, too?

*Cas.* In my grammar, certes. I  
Was educated for a monk of all times, 100  
And once I was well versed in the forgotten  
Etruscan letters, and—were I so minded—  
Could make their hieroglyphics plainer than  
Your alphabet.

*Arn.* And wherefore do you not?

*Cas.* It answers better to resolve the alphabet  
Back into hieroglyphics. Like your statesman,  
And prophet, pontiff, doctor, alchymist,  
Philosopher, and what not, they have built  
More Babels, without new dispersion, than  
The stammering young ones of the flood's dull ooze, 110  
Who failed and fled each other. Why? why, marry,  
Because no man could understand his neighbour.  
They are wiser now, and will not separate  
For nonsense. Nay, it is their brotherhood,  
Their Shibboleth—their Koran—Talmud—their  
Cabala—their best brick-work, wherewithal  
They build more——

*Arn. (interrupting him).* Oh, thou everlasting sneerer !  
Be silent ! How the soldier's rough strain seems  
Softened by distance to a hymn-like cadence !  
Listen !

*Cæs.* Yes. I have heard the angels sing. 120

*Arn.* And demons howl.

*Cæs.* And man, too. Let us listen :  
I love all music.

*Song of the Soldiers within.*

The black bands came over  
The Alps and their snow ;  
With Bourbon, the rover,  
They passed the broad Po.  
We have beaten all foemen,  
We have captured a King,<sup>1</sup>  
We have turned back on no men,  
And so let us sing ! 130  
Here's the Bourbon for ever !  
Though penniless all,  
We'll have one more endeavour  
At yonder old wall.  
With the Bourbon we'll gather  
At day-dawn before  
The gates, and together  
Or break or climb o'er  
The wall : on the ladder,  
As mounts each firm foot,<sup>1</sup> 140  
Our shout shall grow gladder,  
And Death only be mute.<sup>2</sup>  
With the Bourbon we'll mount o'er  
The walls of old Rome,  
And who then shall count o'er<sup>ii</sup>  
The spoils of each dome ?

i. *With a soldier's firm foot.*—[MS.]

ii. *With the Bourbon will count o'er.*—[MS.]

1. [Francis the First was taken prisoner at the Battle of Pavia, February 24, 1525.]

2. [Compare *The Siege of Corinth*, line 752, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 483. There is a note of tragic irony in the soldiers' vain-glorious prophecy.]

Up! up with the Lily!  
 And down with the Keys!  
 In old Rome, the seven-hilly,  
 We'll revel at ease. 150  
 Her streets shall be gory,  
 Her Tiber all red,  
 And her temples so hoary  
 Shall clang with our tread.  
 Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!<sup>1</sup>  
 The Bourbon for aye!  
 Of our song bear the burden!  
 And fire, fire away!  
 With Spain for the vanguard,  
 Our varied host comes; 160  
 And next to the Spaniard  
 Beat Germany's drums;  
 And Italy's lances  
 Are couched at their mother;  
 But our leader from France is,  
 Who warred with his brother.  
 Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!  
 Sans country or home,  
 We'll follow the Bourbon,  
 To plunder old Rome. 170

*Cæs.* An indifferent song  
 For those within the walls, methinks, to hear.

*Arn.* Yes, if they keep to their chorus. But here comes  
 The general with his chiefs and men of trust.<sup>1</sup>  
 A goodly rebel.

*Enter the Constable BOURBON "cum suis," etc., etc.*

*Phil.* How now, noble Prince,  
 You are not cheerful?

*Bourb.* Why should I be so?

*Phil.* Upon the eve of conquest, such as ours,  
 Most men would be so.

i. *The General with his men of confidence.*—[M.S.]

1. [Brantôme (*Memoires, etc.*, 1722, i. 215) quotes a "chanson" of "Les soldats Espagnols" as they marched Romewards. "Calla calla Julio Cesar, Hannibal, y Scipion! Viva la fama de Bourbon."]

*Bourb.* If I were secure !

*Phil.* Doubt not our soldiers. Were the walls of adamant,  
They'd crack them. Hunger is a sharp artillery. 180

*Bourb.* That they will falter is my least of fears.  
That they will be repulsed, with Bourbon for  
Their chief, and all their kindled appetites  
To marshal them on—were those hoary walls  
Mountains, and those who guard them like the gods  
Of the old fables, I would trust my Titans ;—  
But now——

*Phil.* They are but men who war with mortals.

*Bourb.* True : but those walls have girded in great  
ages,  
And sent forth mighty spirits. The past earth  
And present phantom of imperious Rome<sup>1</sup> 190  
Is peopled with those warriors ; and methinks  
They flit along the eternal City's rampart,  
And stretch their glorious, gory, shadowy hands,  
And beckon me away !

*Phil.* So let them ! Wilt thou  
Turn back from shadowy menaces of shadows ?

*Bourb.* They do not menace me. I could have  
faced,  
Methinks, a Sylla's menace ; but they clasp,  
And raise, and wring their dim and deathlike hands,  
And with their thin aspen faces and fixed eyes  
Fascinate mine. Look there !

*Phil.* I look upon 200  
A lofty battlement.

*Bourb.* And there !

*Phil.* Not even  
A guard in sight ; they wisely keep below,  
Sheltered by the grey parapet from some  
Stray bullet of our lansquenets, who might  
Practise in the cool twilight.

*Bourb.* You are blind.

*Phil.* If seeing nothing more than may be seen  
Be so.

*Bourb.* A thousand years have manned the walls

i. *And present phantom of that deathless world.*—[MS.]

With all their heroes,—the last Cato <sup>1</sup> stands  
 And tears his bowels, rather than survive  
 The liberty of that I would enslave. 210  
 And the first Cæsar with his triumphs flits  
 From battlement to battlement.

*Phil.* Then conquer  
 The walls for which he conquered and be greater !

*Bourb.* True : so I will, or perish.

*Phil.* You can not.  
 In such an enterprise to die is rather  
 The dawn of an eternal day, than death.

[Count ARNOLD and CÆSAR advance.]

*Cæs.* And the mere men—do they, too, sweat beneath  
 The noon of this same ever-scorching glory ?

*Bourb.* Ah !  
 Welcome the bitter Hunchback ! and his master,  
 The beauty of our host, and brave as beautiful, 220  
 And generous as lovely. We shall find  
 Work for you both ere morning.

*Cæs.* You will find,  
 So please your Highness, no less for yourself.

*Bourb.* And if I do, there will not be a labourer  
 More forward, Hunchback !

*Cæs.* You may well say so,  
 For *you* have seen that back—as general,  
 Placed in the rear in action—but your foes  
 Have never seen it.

*Bourb.* That 's a fair retort,  
 For I provoked it :—but the Bourbon's breast  
 Has been, and ever shall be, far advanced 230  
 In danger's face as yours, were you the *devil*.

*Cæs.* And if I were, I might have saved myself  
 The toil of coming here.

*Phil.* Why so ?

*Cæs.* One half

1. [When the Uticans decided not to stand a siege, but to send deputies to Cæsar, Cato determined to put an end to his life rather than fall into the hands of the conqueror. Accordingly, after he had retired to rest he stabbed himself under the breast, and when the physician sewed up the wound, he thrust him away, and plucked out his own bowels.—Plutarch's *Lives*, Langhorne's Translation, 1838, p. 553.]

Of your brave bands of their own bold accord  
Will go to him, the other half be sent,  
More swiftly, not less surely.

*Bourb.* Arnold, your  
Slight crooked *friend's* as snake-like in his words  
As his deeds.

*Cæs.* Your Highness much mistakes me.  
The first snake was a flatterer—I am none ;  
And for my deeds, I only sting when stung. 240

*Bourb.* You are brave, and *that's* enough for me ; and  
quick

In speech as sharp in action—and that 's more.  
I am not alone the soldier, but the soldiers'  
Comrade.

*Cæs.* They are but bad company, your Highness ;  
And worse even for their friends than foes, as being  
More permanent acquaintance.

*Phil.* How now, fellow !  
Thou waxest insolent, beyond the privilege  
Of a buffoon.

*Cæs.* You mean I speak the truth.  
I'll lie—it is as easy : then you'll praise me  
For calling you a hero.

*Bourb.* Philibert ! 250

Let him alone ; he 's brave, and ever has  
Been first, with that swart face and mountain shoulder,  
In field or storm, and patient in starvation ;  
And for his tongue, the camp is full of licence,  
And the sharp stinging of a lively rogue  
Is, to my mind, far preferable to  
The gross, dull, heavy, gloomy execration  
Of a mere famished sullen grumbling slave,<sup>1</sup>  
Whom nothing can convince save a full meal,  
And wine, and sleep, and a few Maravedis, 260  
With which he deems him rich.

*Cæs.* It would be well  
If the earth's princes asked no more.

*Bourb.* Be silent !

*Cæs.* Aye, but not idle. Work yourself with words ! <sup>11</sup>

i. *Of a mere starving* —.—[*MS.*]

ii. — *Work away with words.*—[*MS.*]

You have few to speak.

*Phil.* What means the audacious prater ?

*Cæs.* To prate, like other prophets.

*Bourb.* Philibert !

Why will you vex him ? Have we not enough

To think on ? Arnold ! I will lead the attack

To-morrow.

*Arn.* I have heard as much, my Lord.

*Bourb.* And you will follow ?

*Arn.* Since I must not lead.

*Bourb.* 'Tis necessary for the further daring 270  
Of our too needy army, that their chief  
Plant the first foot upon the foremost ladder's  
First step.

*Cæs.* Upon its topmost, let us hope :  
So shall he have his full deserts.

*Bourb.* The world's  
Great capital perchance is ours to-morrow.<sup>i</sup>  
Through every change the seven-hilled city hath  
Retained her sway o'er nations, and the Cæsars  
But yielded to the Alarics, the Alarics  
Unto the pontiffs. Roman, Goth, or priest,  
Still the world's masters ! Civilised, barbarian, 280  
Or saintly, still the walls of Romulus  
Have been the circus of an Empire. Well !  
'Twas *their* turn—now 'tis ours ; and let us hope  
That we will fight as well, and rule much better.

*Cæs.* No doubt, the camp's the school of civic rights.  
What would you make of Rome ?

*Bourb.* That which it was.

*Cæs.* In Alaric's time ?

*Bourb.* No, slave ! in the first Cæsar's,  
Whose name you bear like other curs——

*Cæs.* And kings !

'Tis a great name for blood-hounds.

*Bourb.* There's a demon  
In that fierce rattlesnake thy tongue. Wilt never 290  
Be serious ?

*Cæs.* On the eve of battle, no ;—  
That were not soldier-like. 'Tis for the general

i. *First City rests upon to-morrow's action.*—[MS.]

To be more pensive : we adventurers  
Must be more cheerful. Wherefore should we think ?  
Our tutelar Deity, in a leader's shape,  
Takes care of us. Keep thought aloof from hosts !  
If the knaves take to thinking, you will have  
To crack those walls alone.

*Bourb.* You may sneer, since  
'Tis lucky for you that you fight no worse for 't.

*Cæs.* I thank you for the freedom ; 'tis the only 300  
Pay I have taken in your Highness' service.

*Bourb.* Well, sir, to-morrow you shall pay yourself.  
Look on those towers ; they hold my treasury :  
But, Philibert, we'll in to council. Arnold,  
We would request your presence.

*Arn.* Prince ! my service  
Is yours, as in the field.

*Bourb.* In both we prize it,  
And yours will be a post of trust at daybreak.

*Cæs.* And mine ?

*Bourb.* To follow glory with the Bourbon.  
Good night !

*Arn.* (to CÆSAR). Prepare our armour for the assault,  
And wait within my tent.

[*Exeunt* BOURBON, ARNOLD, PHILIBERT, *etc.*]

*Cæs. (solus).* Within thy tent ! 310  
Think'st thou that I pass from thee with my presence ?

Or that this crooked coffer, which contained

Thy principle of life, is aught to me

Except a mask ? And these are men, forsooth !

Heroes and chiefs, the flower of Adam's bastards !

This is the consequence of giving matter

The power of thought. It is a stubborn substance,

And thinks chaotically, as it acts,

Ever relapsing into its first elements.

Well ! I must play with these poor puppets : 'tis 320

The Spirit's pastime in his idler hours.

When I grow weary of it, I have business

Amongst the stars, which these poor creatures deem

Were made for them to look at. 'Twere a jest now

To bring one down amongst them, and set fire

Unto their anthill : how the pismires then



Would scamper o'er the scalding soil, and, ceasing  
 From tearing down each other's nests, pipe forth  
 One universal orison ! ha ! ha ! [Exit CÆSAR.]

## PART II.

SCENE I.—*Before the walls of Rome.—The Assault: the  
 Army in motion, with ladders to scale the walls ;<sup>1</sup>  
 BOURBON with a white scarf over his armour, foremost.*

*Chorus of Spirits in the air.*

## I.

'Tis the morn, but dim and dark.<sup>1</sup>  
 Whither flies the silent lark ?  
 Whither shrinks the clouded sun ?  
 Is the day indeed begun ?  
 Nature's eye is melancholy  
 O'er the city high and holy :  
 But without there is a din  
 Should arouse the saints within,  
 And revive the heroic ashes  
 Round which yellow Tiber dashes. 10  
 Oh, ye seven hills ! awaken,  
 Ere your very base be shaken !

## II.

Hearken to the steady stamp !  
 Mars is in their every tramp !

i. *'Tis the morning—Hark ! Hark ! Hark !—[MS.]*

1. ["Dès l'aube du lundi 6 mai 1527, le connétable, à cheval, la cuirasse couverte d'un manteau blanc, marcha vers le Borgo, dont les murailles, à la hauteur de San-Spirito, étaient d'accès facile. . . . Bourbon mit pied à terre, et, prenant lui-même une échelle l'appliqua tout près de la porte Torrione."—*De l'Italie*, par Émile Gebhart, 1876, p. 255. Caesar Grolhierius (*Historia expugnata . . . Urbis*, 1637), who claims to speak as an eye-witness (p. 2), describes "Borbonius" as "insignemque veste et armis" (p. 62).]

Not a step is out of tune,  
As the tides obey the moon !  
On they march, though to self-slaughter,  
Regular as rolling water,  
Whose high-waves o'ersweep the border  
Of huge moles, but keep their order, 20  
Breaking only rank by rank.  
Hearken to the armour's clank !  
Look down o'er each frowning warrior,  
How he glares upon the barrier :  
Look on each step of each ladder,  
As the stripes that streak an adder.

## III.

Look upon the bristling wall,  
Manned without an interval !  
Round and round, and tier on tier,  
Cannon's black mouth, shining spear, 30  
Lit match, bell-mouthed Musquetoen,  
Gaping to be murderous soon ;  
All the warlike gear of old,  
Mixed with what we now behold,  
In this strife 'twixt old and new,  
Gather like a locusts' crew.  
Shade of Remus ! 'tis a time  
Awful as thy brother's crime !  
Christians war against Christ's shrine :—  
Must its lot be like to thine ? 40

## IV.

Near—and near—and nearer still,  
As the Earthquake saps the hill,  
First with trembling, hollow motion,  
Like a scarce awakened ocean,  
Then with stronger shock and louder,  
Till the rocks are crushed to powder,—  
Onward sweeps the rolling host !  
Heroes of the immortal boast !  
Mighty Chiefs ! eternal shadows !  
First flowers of the bloody meadows 50

Which encompass Rome, the mother  
 Of a people without brother !  
 Will you sleep when nations' quarrels  
 Plough the root up of your laurels ?  
 Ye who weep o'er Carthage burning,  
 Weep not—*strike* ! for Rome is mourning !<sup>1</sup>

## V.

Onward sweep the varied nations !  
 Famine long hath dealt their rations.  
 To the wall, with hate and hunger,  
 Numerous as wolves, and stronger, 60  
 On they sweep. Oh, glorious City !  
 Must thou be a theme for pity ?  
 Fight, like your first sire, each Roman !  
 Alaric was a gentle foeman,  
 Matched with Bourbon's black banditti !  
 Rouse thee, thou eternal City ;  
 Rouse thee ! Rather give the torch  
 With thine own hand to thy porch,<sup>1</sup>  
 Than behold such hosts pollute  
 Your worst dwelling with their foot. 70

## VI.

Ah ! behold yon bleeding spectre !  
 Ilion's children find no Hector ;  
 Priam's offspring loved their brother ;  
 Rome's great sire forgot his mother,  
 When he slew his gallant twin,  
 With inexpiable sin.  
 See the giant shadow stride  
 O'er the ramparts high and wide !  
 When the first o'erleapt thy wall,  
 Its foundation mourned thy fall. 80  
 Now, though towering like a Babel,  
 Who to stop his steps are able ?

i. *Than such victors should pollute.*—[MS.]

1. Scipio, the second Africanus, is said to have repeated a verse of Homer [*Iliad*, vi. 448], and wept over the burning of Carthage [B.C. 146]. He had better have granted it a capitulation.

Stalking o'er thy highest dome,  
Remus claims his vengeance, Rome !

## VII.

Now they reach thee in their anger :  
Fire and smoke and hellish clangour  
Are around thee, thou world's wonder !  
Death is in thy walls and under.  
Now the meeting steel first clashes,  
Downward then the ladder crashes, 90  
With its iron load all gleaming,  
Lying at its foot blaspheming !  
Up again ! for every warrior  
Slain, another climbs the barrier.  
Thicker grows the strife : thy ditches  
Europe's mingling gore enriches.  
Rome ! although thy wall may perish,  
Such manure thy fields will cherish,  
Making gay the harvest-home ;  
But thy hearths, alas ! oh, Rome !— 100  
Yet be Rome amidst thine anguish,  
Fight as thou wast wont to vanquish !

## VIII.

Yet once more, ye old Penates !  
Let not your quenched hearts be Atés !  
Yet again, ye shadowy Heroes,  
Yield not to these stranger Neros !  
Though the son who slew his mother  
Shed Rome's blood, he was your brother :  
'Twas the Roman curbed the Roman ;—  
Brennus was a baffled foeman. 110  
Yet again, ye saints and martyrs,  
Rise ! for yours are holier charters !  
Mighty Gods of temples falling,  
Yet in ruin still appalling !  
Mightier Founders of those altars,  
True and Christian,—strike the assaulters !  
Tiber ! Tiber ! let thy torrent  
Show even Nature's self abhorrent.

Let each breathing heart dilated  
 Turn, as doth the lion baited ! 120  
 Rome be crushed to one wide tomb,  
 But be still the Roman's Rome !<sup>1</sup>

[BOURBON, ARNOLD, CÆSAR, and others, arrive at the foot of the wall. ARNOLD is about to plant his ladder.

*Bourb.* Hold, Arnold ! I am first.

*Arn.* Not so, my Lord.

*Bourb.* Hold, sir, I charge you ! Follow ! I am proud  
 Of such a follower, but will brook no leader.

[BOURBON plants his ladder, and begins to mount.  
 Now, boys ! On ! on !

[A shot strikes him, and BOURBON falls.

*Cæs.* And off !

*Arn.* Eternal powers !

The host will be appalled,—but vengeance ! vengeance !

*Bourb.* 'Tis nothing—lend me your hand.

[BOURBON takes ARNOLD by the hand, and rises ; but  
 as he puts his foot on the step, falls again.

Arnold ! I am sped.

Conceal my fall<sup>2</sup>—all will go well—conceal it !

Fling my cloak o'er what will be dust anon ; 130

Let not the soldiers see it.

*Arn.* You must be

Removed ; the aid of—

*Bourb.* No, my gallant boy !

Death is upon me. But what is *one* life ?

The Bourbon's spirit shall command them still.

Keep them yet ignorant that I am but clay,

Till they are conquerors—then do as you may.

1. [Byron retains or adopts the old-fashioned pronunciation of the word "Rome" *metri gratiâ*. Compare *The Island*, Canto II. line 199.]

2. ["Le bouillant Bourbon, à la tête des plus intrepides assaillans tenoit, de la main gauche une échelle appuyée contre le mur, et de la droite faisoit signe à ses soldats de monter pour suivre leurs camarades ; en ce moment il reçut dans le flanc une balle d'arquebuse qui le traversa de part en part ; il tomba à terre, mortellement blessé. On rapporte qu'avant d'expirer il prononça ces mots : 'Officiers et soldats, cachez ma mort à l'ennemi et marchez toujours en avant ; la victoire est à vous, mon trépas ne peut vous la ravir.'"—*Sac de Rome en 1527*, par Jacques Buonaparte, 1836, p. 221.]

*Cæs.* Would not your Highness choose to kiss the cross?

We have no priest here, but the hilt of sword  
May serve instead:—it did the same for Bayard.<sup>1</sup>

*Bourb.* Thou bitter slave! to name *him* at this time!  
But I deserve it.

*Arn.* (to CÆSAR). Villain, hold your peace! 141

*Cæs.* What, when a Christian dies? Shall I not offer  
A Christian "Vade in pace?"<sup>2</sup>

*Arn.* Silence! Oh!  
Those eyes are glazing which o'erlooked the world,  
And saw no equal.

*Bourb.* Arnold, shouldst thou see  
France——But hark! hark! the assault grows warmer—  
Oh!

For but an hour, a minute more of life,  
To die within the wall! Hence, Arnold, hence!  
You lose time—they will conquer Rome without thee.

*Arn.* And without *thee*.

*Bourb.* Not so; I'll lead them still 150  
In spirit. Cover up my dust, and breathe not  
That I have ceased to breathe. Away! and be  
Victorious.

*Arn.* But I must not leave thee thus.

*Bourb.* You must—farewell—Up! up! the world is  
winning. [BOURBON *dies*.

*Cæs.* (to ARNOLD). Come, Count, to business.

*Arn.* True. I'll weep hereafter.

[ARNOLD *covers* BOURBON'S *body with a mantle,*  
*mounts the ladder, crying*

The Bourbon! Bourbon! On, boys! Rome is ours!

*Cæs.* Good night, Lord Constable! thou wert a Man.

[CÆSAR *follows* ARNOLD; *they reach the battlement;*  
*ARNOLD and CÆSAR are struck down.*

1. ["Quand il sentit le coup, se print à crier: 'Jésus!' et puis il dist 'Hélas! mon Dieu, je suis mort!' Si prit son espée par la poignée en signe de croix en disant tout hault, 'Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.'"—*Chronique de Bayart*, 1836, cap. lxiv., p. 119. For his rebuke of Charles de Bourbon, "Ne me plaignez pas," etc., *vide ante*, p. 499.]

2. ["'M. de Bourbon,' dit un contemporain, 'termina de vie par mort, mais avant fist le devoir de bon Chrestien; car il se confessa et reçut son Créateur.'"—*De l'Italie*, par Émile Gebhart, 1876, p. 256.]

*Cæs.* A precious somerset ! Is your countship injured ?

*Arn.* No. [Remounts the ladder.]

*Cæs.* A rare blood-hound, when his own is heated !  
And 'tis no boy's play. Now he strikes them down ! 160  
His hand is on the battlement—he grasps it  
As though it were an altar ; now his foot  
Is on it, and——What have we here ?—a Roman ?  
The first bird of the covey ! he has fallen [A man falls.]  
On the outside of the nest. Why, how now, fellow ?

*Wounded Man.* A drop of water !

*Cæs.* Blood 's the only liquid  
Nearer than Tiber.

*Wounded Man.* I have died for Rome. [Dies.]

*Cæs.* And so did Bourbon, in another sense.  
Oh, these immortal men ! and their great motives !  
But I must after my young charge. He is 170  
By this time i' the Forum. Charge ! charge !  
[CÆSAR mounts the ladder ; the scene closes.]

SCENE II.—*The City.—Combats between the Besiegers and  
Besieged in the streets. Inhabitants flying in confusion.*

*Enter CÆSAR.*

*Cæs.* I cannot find my hero ; he is mixed  
With the heroic crowd that now pursue  
The fugitives, or battle with the desperate.  
What have we here ? A Cardinal or two  
That do not seem in love with martyrdom.  
How the old red-shanks scamper ! Could they doff  
Their hose as they have doffed their hats, 'twould be  
A blessing, as a mark<sup>1</sup> the less for plunder.  
But let them fly ; the crimson kennels now  
Will not much stain their stockings, since the mire 10  
Is of the self-same purple hue.

1. [“While I was at work upon that diabolical task of mine, there came, from time to time, to watch me, some of the Cardinals who were invested in the castle ; and most frequently the Cardinal of Ravenna and the Cardinal de' Gaddi. I often told them not to show themselves, since their nasty red caps gave a fair mark for the enemy.” —*Life of Benvenuto Cellini*, translated by J. A. Symonds, 1888, i. 112. See, too, for the flight of the Cardinals, *Sac de Rome*, par Jacques Buonaparte, Paris, 1836, p. 203.]

*Enter a Party fighting—ARNOLD at the head of the Besiegers.*

He comes,  
Hand in hand with the mild twins—Gore and Glory.<sup>1</sup>  
Holla ! hold, Count !

*Arn.* Away ! they must not rally.

*Cæs.* I tell thee, be not rash ; a golden bridge  
Is for a flying enemy. I gave thee  
A form of beauty, and an  
Exemption from some maladies of body,  
But not of mind, which is not mine to give.  
But though I gave the form of Thetis' son,  
I dipped thee not in Styx ; and 'gainst a foe 20  
I would not warrant thy chivalric heart  
More than Pelides' heel ; why, then, be cautious,  
And know thyself a mortal still.

*Arn.* And who  
With aught of soul would combat if he were  
Invulnerable ? That were pretty sport.  
Think'st thou I beat for hares when lions roar ?  
[ARNOLD rushes into the combat.

*Cæs.* A precious sample of humanity !  
Well, his blood 's up ; and, if a little 's shed,  
'Twill serve to curb his fever.

[ARNOLD engages with a Roman, who retires towards  
a portico.

*Arn.* Yield thee, slave !  
I promise quarter.

*Rom.* That 's soon said.

*Arn.* And done—— 30  
My word is known.

*Rom.* So shall be my deeds.

[*They re-engage. CÆSAR comes forward.*

*Cæs.* Why, Arnold ! hold thine own : thou hast in hand  
A famous artisan, a cunning sculptor ;  
Also a dealer in the sword and dagger.  
Not so, my musqueteer ; 'twas he who slew  
The Bourbon from the wall.<sup>1</sup>

i. Covered with gore and glory—those good times.—[MS.]

1. ["Directing my arquebuse where I saw the thickest and most



*Arn.* Aye, did he so?  
Then he hath carved his monument.

*Rom.* I yet  
May live to carve your better's.

*Cæs.* Well said, my man of marble! Benvenuto,  
Thou hast some practice in both ways; and he 40  
Who slays Cellini will have worked as hard  
As e'er thou didst upon Carrara's blocks.

[ARNOLD *disarms and wounds* CELLINI, *but slightly*;  
*the latter draws a pistol, and fires; then retires,*  
*and disappears through the portico.*

*Cæs.* How farest thou? Thou hast a taste, methinks,  
Of red Bellona's banquet.

*Arn. (staggered).* 'Tis a scratch.  
Lend me thy scarf. He shall not 'scape me thus.

*Cæs.* Where is it?

*Arn.* In the shoulder, not the sword arm—  
And that 's enough. I am thirsty: would I had  
A helm of water!

*Cæs.* That 's a liquid now  
In requisition, but by no means easiest  
To come at.

*Arn.* And my thirst increases;—but 50  
I'll find a way to quench it.

*Cæs.* Or be quenched  
Thyself.

*Arn.* The chance is even; we will throw  
The dice thereon. But I lose time in prating;  
Prithce be quick. [CÆSAR *binds on the scarf.*

And what dost thou so idly?  
Why dost not strike?

serried troop of fighting men, I aimed exactly at one whom I remarked to be higher than the rest; the fog prevented me from being certain whether he was on horseback or on foot. Then I turned to Alessandro and Cecchino, and bade them discharge their arquebuses, showing them how to avoid being hit by the besiegers. When we had fired two rounds apiece, I crept cautiously up to the walls, and observing a most extraordinary confusion, I discovered afterwards that one of our shots had killed the Constable of Bourbon; and from what I subsequently learned he was the man whom I had first noticed above the heads of the rest." It is a fact "that Bourbon was shot dead near the spot Cellini mentions. But the honour of flying the arquebuse . . . cannot be assigned to any one in particular."—*Life of Benvenuto Cellini*, 1838, i. 114, and *note*.]

*Cæs.* Your old philosophers  
Beheld mankind, as mere spectators of  
The Olympic games. When I behold a prize  
Worth wrestling for, I may be found a Milo.<sup>1</sup>

*Arn.* Aye, 'gainst an oak.

*Cæs.* A forest, when it suits me :  
I combat with a mass, or not at all. 60  
Meantime, pursue thy sport as I do mine ;  
Which is just now to gaze, since all these labourers  
Will reap my harvest gratis.

*Arn.* Thou art still  
A fiend !

*Cæs.* And thou—a man.

*Arn.* Why, such I fain would show me.<sup>i</sup>

*Cæs.* True—as men are.

*Arn.* And what is that ?

*Cæs.* Thou feelest and thou see'st.

[*Exit ARNOLD, joining in the combat which still  
continues between detached parties. The scene  
closes.*]

SCENE III.—*St. Peter's—The interior of the Church—The  
Pope at the Altar—Priests, etc., crowding in confusion,  
and Citizens flying for refuge, pursued by Soldiery.*

*Enter CÆSAR.*

*A Spanish Soldier.* Down with them, comrades, seize  
upon those lamps !  
Cleave yon bald-pated shaveling to the chine !  
His rosary's of gold !

*Lutheran Soldier.* Revenge ! revenge !  
Plunder hereafter, but for vengeance now—  
Yonder stands Anti-Christ !

*Cæs. (interposing).* How now, schismatic ?  
What wouldst thou ?

i. 'Tis the moment  
When such I fain would show me.—[MS.]

i. [Compare *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*, stanza vi. line 2, *Poetical  
Works*, 1900, iii. 307, note 3.]

*Luth. Sold.* In the holy name of Christ,  
Destroy proud Anti-Christ.<sup>1</sup> I am a Christian.

*Cæs.* Yea, a disciple that would make the founder  
Of your belief renounce it, could he see  
Such proselytes. Best stint thyself to plunder. 10

*Luth. Sold.* I say he is the Devil.

*Cæs.* Hush! keep that secret,<sup>1</sup>  
Lest he should recognise you for his own.

*Luth. Sold.* Why would you save him? I repeat he is  
The Devil, or the Devil's vicar upon earth.

*Cæs.* And that's the reason: would you make a quarrel  
With your best friends? You had far best be quiet;  
His hour is not yet come.

*Luth. Sold.* That shall be seen!

[*The Lutheran Soldier rushes forward: a shot strikes  
him from one of the Pope's Guards, and he falls  
at the foot of the Altar.*<sup>2</sup>

*Cæs. (to the Lutheran).* I told you so.

*Luth. Sold.* And will you not avenge me?

i. *Hush! don't let him hear you  
Or he might take you off before your time.*—[MS.]

1. [Among the Imperial troops which Charles de Bourbon led against Rome were at least six thousand Landsknechts, ardent converts to the Reformed religion, and eager to prove their zeal by the slaughter of Catholics and the destruction of altars and crucifixes. Their leader, George Frundsberg, had set out for Rome with the pious intention of hanging the Pope (see *The Popes of Rome*, by Leopold Ranke, translated by Sarah Austen, 1866, i. 72). Brantôme (*Mémoires de Messire Pierre de Bourdeille*. . . . Leyde, 1722, i. 230) gives a vivid picture of their fanatical savagery: "Leur cruauté ne s'estendit pas seulement sur les personnes, mais sur les marbres et les anciennes statues. Les Lansquenets, qui nouvellement estoient imbus de la nouvelle Religion, et les Espagnols encore aussi bien que les autres, s'habilloient en Cardinaux et évesques en leur habits Pontificaux et se pourmenoiient ainsi parmy la Ville."

In the Schmalkald articles, 1530, the pious belief that the Pope was Antichrist became an article of the Lutheran creed. Compare the following extracts, quoted by Hans Schultz in *Der Sacco di Roma*, 1894, p. 63, from the *Historia von der Romischen Bischoff*, etc., 1527: "Der Papst ist für den Verfasser der Antichrist, der durch Lug und Trug seine Herrschaft in der Welt behauptet."

2. ["Quant à l'armée impériale, on n'en vit jamais de plus étonnante. . . . Allemands et Espagnols, luthériens iconoclastes qui brûlaient les églises, ou furieux mystiques qui brûlaient Juifs et Maures, barbares plus raffinés que leur vieux ancêtres les Visigoths, les Vandales et les Huns, ils frappaient l'Italie d'une terreur sans exemple."—*De l'Italie*, by E. Gebhart, chap. vii., "Le Sac de Rome en 1527," p. 245.]

*Cæs.* Not I! You know that "Vengeance is the Lord's:"

You see he loves no interlopers.

*Luth. Sold. (dying).*

Oh!

20

Had I but slain him, I had gone on high,  
Crowned with eternal glory! Heaven, forgive  
My feebleness of arm that reached him not,  
And take thy servant to thy mercy. 'Tis  
A glorious triumph still; proud Babylon's  
No more; the Harlot of the Seven Hills  
Hath changed her scarlet raiment for sackcloth  
And ashes!

[*The Lutheran dies.*]

*Cæs.* Yes, thine own amidst the rest.  
Well done, old Babel!

[*The Guards defend themselves desperately, while the Pontiff escapes, by a private passage, to the Vatican and the Castle of St. Angelo.*<sup>1</sup>]

*Cæs.*

Ha! right nobly battled!

Now, priest! now, soldier! the two great professions, 30  
Together by the ears and hearts! I have not  
Seen a more comic pantomime since Titus  
Took Jewry. But the Romans had the best then;  
Now they must take their turn.

*Soldiers.*

He hath escaped!

Follow!

*Another Sold.* They have barred the narrow passage up,  
And it is clogged with dead even to the door.

*Cæs.* I am glad he hath escaped: he may thank me for't  
In part. I would not have his bulls abolished—  
'Twere worth one half our empire: his indulgences  
Demand some in return; no, no, he must not 40  
Fall;—and besides, his now escape may furnish  
A future miracle, in future proof

1. ["We got with the greatest difficulty to the gate of the castle. . . . I ascended to the keep, and, at the same instant, Pope Clement came in through the corridors into the castle; he had refused to leave the palace of St. Peter earlier, being unable to believe that his enemies would effect their entrance into Rome."—*Life of Benvenuto Cellini*, translated by J. A. Symonds, 1888, i. 114, 115.]

So, too, Jacques Buonaparte (*Le Sac de Rome*, 1836, p. 202): "Le Pape Clement, avoit entendu les cris des soldats; il se sauvait précipitamment par un long corridor pratiqué dans un mur double et se laissoit emporter de son palais au château Saint-Ange."]

Of his infallibility. [To the Spanish Soldiery.

Well, cut-throats !

What do you pause for ? If you make not haste,

There will not be a link of pious gold left.

And *you*, too, Catholics ! Would ye return

From such a pilgrimage without a relic ?

The very Lutherans have more true devotion :

See how they strip the shrines !

*Soldiers.*

By holy Peter !

He speaks the truth ; the heretics will bear 50

The best away.

*Cæs.*

And that were shame ! Go to !

Assist in their conversion.

[*The Soldiers disperse ; many quit the Church, others enter.*

*Cæs.*

They are gone,

And others come : so flows the wave on wave

Of what these creatures call Eternity,

Deeming themselves the breakers of the Ocean,

While they are but its bubbles, ignorant

That foam is their foundation. So, another !

*Enter OLIMPIA, flying from the pursuit—She springs upon the Altar.*

*Sold.* She 's mine !

*Another Sold. (opposing the former).* You lie, I tracked her first : and were she

The Pope's niece, I'll not yield her. [They fight.

*3d Sold. (advancing towards OLIMPIA).* You may settle Your claims ; I'll make mine good.

*Olimp.*

Infernal slave ! 60

You touch me not alive.

*3d Sold.*

Alive or dead !

*Olimp. (embracing a massive crucifix).* Respect your God !

*3d Sold.* Yes, when he shines in gold.

Girl, you but grasp your dowry.

[*As he advances, OLIMPIA, with a strong and sudden effort, casts down the crucifix ; it strikes the Soldier, who falls.*

3d Sold. Oh, great God!

*Olimp.* Ah! now you recognise him.

3d Sold. My brain's crushed!

Comrades, help, ho! All's darkness! [*He dies.*]

*Other Soldiers (coming up).* Slay her, although she had  
a thousand lives:

She hath killed our comrade.

*Olimp.* Welcome such a death!

You have no life to give, which the worst slave  
Would take. Great God! through thy redeeming Son,  
And thy Son's Mother, now receive me as 70  
I would approach thee, worthy her, and him, and thee!

*Enter ARNOLD.*

*Arn.* What do I see? Accurséd jackals!  
Forbear!

*Cæs. (aside and laughing).* Ha! ha! here's equity!  
The dogs

Have as much right as he. But to the issue!

*Soldiers.* Count, she hath slain our comrade.

*Arn.* With what weapon?

*Sold.* The cross, beneath which he is crushed; behold  
him

Lie there, more like a worm than man; she cast it  
Upon his head.

*Arn.* Even so: there is a woman

Worthy a brave man's liking. Were ye such,  
Ye would have honoured her. But get ye hence, 80  
And thank your meanness, other God you have none,  
For your existence. Had you touched a hair  
Of those dishevelled locks, I would have thinned  
Your ranks more than the enemy. Away!  
Ye jackals! gnaw the bones the lion leaves,  
But not even these till he permits.

*A Sold. (murmuring).* The lion

Might conquer for himself then.

*Arn. (cuts him down).* Mutineer!

Rebel in hell—you shall obey on earth!

[*The Soldiers assault ARNOLD.*]

*Arn.* Come on! I'm glad on't! I will show you, slaves,

How you should be commanded, and who led you 90  
 First o'er the wall you were so shy to scale,  
 Until I waved my banners from its height,  
 As you are bold within it.

[ARNOLD *mows down the foremost ; the rest throw down their arms.*

*Soldiers.* Mercy ! mercy !

*Arn.* Then learn to grant it. Have I taught you *who*  
 Led you o'er Rome's eternal battlements ?

*Soldiers.* We saw it, and we know it ; yet forgive  
 A moment's error in the heat of conquest—  
 The conquest which you led to.

*Arn.* Get you hence !  
 Hence to your quarters ! you will find them fixed  
 In the Colonna palace.

*Olimp. (aside).* In my father's 100  
 House !

*Arn. (to the Soldiers).* Leave your arms ; ye have no  
 further need  
 Of such : the city's rendered. And mark well  
 You keep your hands clean, or I'll find out a stream  
 As red as Tiber now runs, for your baptism.

*Soldiers (deposing their arms and departing).* We obey !

*Arn. (to OLIMPIA).* Lady, you are safe.

*Olimp.* I should be so,  
 Had I a knife even ; but it matters not—  
 Death hath a thousand gates ; and on the marble,  
 Even at the altar foot, whence I look down  
 Upon destruction, shall my head be dashed,  
 Ere thou ascend it. God forgive thee, man ! 110

*Arn.* I wish to merit his forgiveness, and  
 Thine own, although I have not injured thee.

*Olimp.* No ! Thou hast only sacked my native land,—  
 No injury !—and made my father's house  
 A den of thieves ! No injury !—this temple—  
 Slippery with Roman and with holy gore !  
 No injury ! And now thou wouldst preserve me,  
 To be——but that shall never be !

[*She raises her eyes to Heaven, folds her robe round her, and prepares to dash herself down on the side of the Altar opposite to that where ARNOLD stands.*

*Arn.* Hold ! hold !  
I swear.

*Olimp.* Spare thine already forfeit soul  
A perjury for which even Hell would loathe thee. 120  
I know thee.

*Arn.* No, thou know'st me not ; I am not  
Of these men, though——

*Olimp.* I judge thee by thy mates ;  
It is for God to judge thee as thou art.  
I see thee purple with the blood of Rome ;  
Take mine, 'tis all thou e'er shalt have of me,  
And here, upon the marble of this temple,  
Where the baptismal font baptized me God's,  
I offer him a blood less holy  
But not less pure (pure as it left me then,  
A redeemed infant) than the holy water 130  
The saints have sanctified !

[*OLIMPIA waves her hand to ARNOLD with disdain,  
and dashes herself on the pavement from the  
Altar.*]

*Arn.* Eternal God !  
I feel thee now ! Help ! help ! she's gone.  
*Cæs. (approaches).* I am here.

*Arn.* Thou ! but oh, save her !

*Cæs. (assisting him to raise OLIMPIA).* She hath done  
it well !

The leap was serious.

*Arn.* Oh ! she is lifeless !

*Cæs.* If  
She be so, I have nought to do with that :  
The resurrection is beyond me.

*Arn.* Slave !

*Cæs.* Aye, slave or master, 'tis all one : methinks  
Good words, however, are as well at times.

*Arn.* Words !—Canst thou aid her ?

*Cæs.* I will try. A sprinkling  
Of that same holy water may be useful. 140

[*He brings some in his helmet from the font.*]

*Arn.* 'Tis mixed with blood.

*Cæs.* There is no cleaner now  
In Rome.



*Arn.* How pale ! how beautiful ! how lifeless !  
 Alive or dead, thou Essence of all Beauty,  
 I love but thee !

*Cæs.* Even so Achilles loved  
 Penthesilea ;<sup>1</sup> with his form it seems  
 You have his heart, and yet it was no soft one.

*Arn.* She breathes ! But no, 'twas nothing, or the last  
 Faint flutter Life disputes with Death.

*Cæs.* She breathes.

*Arn.* Thou say'st it ? Then 'tis truth.

*Cæs.* You do me right—  
 The Devil speaks truth much oftener than he 's deemed :  
 He hath an ignorant audience. 151

*Arn.* (*without attending to him*). Yes ! her heart beats.  
 Alas ! that the first beat of the only heart  
 I ever wished to beat with mine should vibrate  
 To an assassin's pulse.

*Cæs.* A sage reflection,  
 But somewhat late i' the day. Where shall we bear her ?  
 I say she lives.

*Arn.* And will she live ?

*Cæs.* As much  
 As dust can.

*Arn.* Then she is dead !

*Cæs.* Bah ! bah ! You are so,  
 And do not know it. She will come to life—  
 Such as you think so, such as you now are ;  
 But we must work by human means.

*Arn.* We will 160  
 Convey her unto the Colonna palace,  
 Where I have pitched my banner.

*Cæs.* Come then ! raise her up !

*Arn.* Softly !

*Cæs.* As softly as they bear the dead,  
 Perhaps because they cannot feel the jolting.

*Arn.* But doth she live indeed ?

*Cæs.* Nay, never fear !  
 But, if you rue it after, blame not me.

1. [Penthesilea, Queen of the Amazons, was slain by Achilles, who wept over her as she lay a-dying, bewailing her beauty and her daring. For the picture, see Pausanias, *Descriptio Græciæ*, lib. v. cap. 11, 2.]

*Arn.* Let her but live !

*Cæs.* The Spirit of her life  
Is yet within her breast, and may revive.

Count ! count ! I am your servant in all things,  
And this is a new office :—'tis not oft

170

I am employed in such ; but you perceive  
How staunch a friend is what you call a fiend.  
On earth you have often only fiends for friends ;  
Now *I* desert not mine. Soft ! bear her hence,  
The beautiful half-clay, and nearly spirit !  
I am almost enamoured of her, as  
Of old the Angels of her earliest sex.<sup>1</sup>

*Arn.* Thou !

*Cæs.* I ! But fear not. I'll not be your rival.

*Arn.* Rival !

*Cæs.* I could be one right formidable ;

But since I slew the seven husbands of

180

Tobias' future bride (and after all

Was smoked out by some incense),<sup>2</sup> I have laid

Aside intrigue : 'tis rarely worth the trouble

Of gaining, or—what is more difficult—

Getting rid of your prize again ; for there 's

The rub ! at least to mortals.

*Arn.* Prithee, peace !  
Softly ! methinks her lips move, her eyes open !

*Cæs.* Like stars, no doubt ; for that 's a metaphor  
For Lucifer and Venus.

*Arn.* To the palace  
Colonna, as I told you !

*Cæs.* Oh ! I know

190

My way through Rome.

*Arn.* Now onward, onward ! Gently !

[*Exeunt, bearing OLIMPIA. The scene closes.*]

1. [See *Gen.* vi. 2, the motto of *Heaven and Earth*, ante, p. 277.]

2. ["It came to pass the same day, that in Ecbatane a city of Media, Sara the daughter of Raguel was also reproached by her father's maids ; because that she had been married to seven husbands, whom Asmodeus the evil spirit had killed before they had lain with her. . . . And as he went, he remembered the words of Raphael, and took the ashes of the perfumes, and put the heart and the liver of the fish thereupon, and made smoke therewith. The which smell when the evil spirit had smelled, he fled into the utmost parts of Egypt."—*Tobit* iii. 7, 8 ; viii. 2, 3.]

## PART III.

SCENE I.—*A Castle in the Apennines, surrounded by a wild but smiling Country. Chorus of Peasants singing before the Gates.*

*Chorus.*

## I.

The wars are over,  
The spring is come ;  
The bride and her lover  
Have sought their home :  
They are happy, we rejoice ;  
Let their hearts have an echo in every voice !

## II.

The spring is come ; the violet's gone,  
The first-born child of the early sun :<sup>i</sup>  
With us she is but a winter's flower,  
The snow on the hills cannot blast her bower, 10  
And she lifts up her dewy eye of blue  
To the youngest sky of the self-same hue.

## III.

And when the spring comes with her host  
Of flowers, that flower beloved the most  
Shrinks from the crowd that may confuse  
Her heavenly odour and virgin hues.

## IV.

Pluck the others, but still remember  
Their herald out of dim December—  
The morning star of all the flowers,  
The pledge of daylight's lengthened hours ; 20  
Nor, midst the roses, e'er forget  
The virgin—virgin Violet.

i. *The first born who burst the winter sun.*—[MS.]

*Enter CÆSAR.*

*Cæs.* (*singing*). The wars are all over,  
 Our swords are all idle,  
 The steed bites the bridle,  
 The casque 's on the wall.  
 There 's rest for the rover;  
 But his armour is rusty,  
 And the veteran grows crusty,  
 As he yawns in the hall. 30  
 He drinks—but what 's drinking?  
 A mere pause from thinking!  
 No bugle awakes him with life-and-death call.

*Chorus.*

But the hound bayeth loudly,  
 The boar 's in the wood,  
 And the falcon longs proudly  
 To spring from her hood  
 On the wrist of the noble  
 She sits like a crest,  
 And the air is in trouble 40  
 With birds from their nest.

*Cæs.* Oh! shadow of Glory!  
 Dim image of War!  
 But the chase hath no story,  
 Her hero no star,  
 Since Nimrod, the founder  
 Of empire and chase,  
 Who made the woods wonder  
 And quake for their race. 50  
 When the lion was young,  
 In the pride of his might,  
 Then 'twas sport for the strong  
 To embrace him in fight;  
 To go forth, with a pine  
 For a spear, 'gainst the mammoth,  
 Or strike through the ravine<sup>i</sup>;  
 At the foaming behemoth;

i. — *through the brine.*—[*MS.*]

While man was in stature  
As towers in our time,  
The first born of Nature, 60  
And, like her, sublime !

*Chorus.*

But the wars are over,  
The spring is come ;  
The bride and her lover  
Have sought their home :  
They are happy, and we rejoice ;  
Let their hearts have an echo from every voice !  
[*Exeunt the Peasantry, singing.*

FRAGMENT OF THE THIRD PART OF  
*THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED.*

*Chorus.*

When the merry bells are ringing,  
 And the peasant girls are singing  
 And the early flowers are flinging  
   Their odours in the air ;  
 And the honey bee is clinging  
 To the buds ; and birds are winging  
   Their way, pair by pair :  
 Then the earth looks free from trouble  
 With the brightness of a bubble :  
 Though I did not make it, 10  
 I could breathe on and break it ;  
 But too much I scorn it,  
 Or else I would mourn it,  
 To see despots and slaves  
 Playing o'er their own graves.

*Enter COUNT ARNOLD.*

*Mem.* Jealous—Arnold of Cæsar.  
 { Olympia at first not liking Cæsar  
   —then?—Arnold jealous of himself  
   under his former figure, owing to  
   the power of intellect, etc., etc., etc.

*Arnold.* You are merry, Sir—what? singing too?

*Cæsar.*

It is

The land of Song—and Canticles you know  
 Were once my avocation.

*Arn.*

Nothing moves you ;

You scoff even at your own calamity—

And such calamity ! how wert thou fallen 20  
 Son of the Morning ! and yet Lucifer  
 Can smile.

*Cæs.* His shape can—would you have me weep,  
 In the fair form I wear, to please you ?

*Arn.* Ah !

*Cæs.* You are grave—what have you on your spirit !

*Arn.* Nothing.

*Cæs.* How mortals lie by instinct ! If you ask  
 A disappointed courtier—What 's the matter ?  
 "Nothing"—an outshone Beauty what has made  
 Her smooth brow crisp—"Oh, Nothing !"—a young heir  
 When his Sire has recovered from the Gout,  
 What ails him ? "Nothing !" or a Monarch who 30  
 Has heard the truth, and looks imperial on it—  
 What clouds his royal aspect ? "Nothing," "Nothing !" 30  
 Nothing—eternal nothing—of these nothings  
 All are a lie—for all to them are much !  
 And they themselves alone the real "Nothings."  
 Your present Nothing, too, is something to you—  
 What is it ?

*Arn.* Know you not ?

*Cæs.* I only know  
 What I desire to know ! and will not waste  
 Omniscience upon phantoms. Out with it !  
 If you seek aid from me—or else be silent. 40  
 And eat your thoughts—till they breed snakes within  
 you.

*Arn.* Olimpia !

*Cæs.* I thought as much—go on.

*Arn.* I thought she had loved me.

*Cæs.* Blessings on your Creed !  
 What a good Christian you were found to be !  
 But what cold Sceptic hath appalled your faith  
 And transubstantiated to crumbs again  
 The *body* of your Credence ?

*Arn.* No one—but—  
 Each day—each hour—each minute shows me more  
 And more she loves me not—

*Cæs.* Doth she rebel ?

*Arn.* No, she is calm, and meek, and silent with me,

And coldly dutiful, and proudly patient— 51  
Endures my Love—not meets it.

*Cæs.* That seems strange.  
You are beautiful and brave ! the first is much  
For passion—and the rest for Vanity.

*Arn.* I saved her life, too ; and her Father's life,  
And Father's house from ashes.

*Cæs.* These are nothing.  
You seek for Gratitude—the Philosopher's stone.

*Arn.* And find it not.

*Cæs.* You cannot find what is not.  
But *found* would it content you ? would you owe  
To thankfulness what you desire from Passion ? 60  
No ! No ! you would be *loved*—what you call loved—  
*Self-loved*—loved for *yourself*—for neither health,  
Nor wealth, nor youth, nor power, nor rank, nor beauty—  
For these you may be stript of—but *beloved*  
As an abstraction—for—you know not what !  
These are the wishes of a moderate lover—  
And *so* you love.

*Arn.* Ah ! could I be beloved,  
Would I ask wherefore ?

*Cæs.* Yes ! and not believe  
The answer—You are jealous.

*Arn.* And of whom ?

*Cæs.* It may be of yourself,<sup>1</sup> for Jealousy 70  
Is as a shadow of the Sun. The Orb  
Is mighty—as you mortals deem—and to  
Your little Universe seems universal ;  
But, great as He appears, and is to you,  
The smallest cloud—the slightest vapour of  
Your humid earth enables you to look  
Upon a Sky which you revile as dull ;  
Though your eyes dare not gaze on it when cloudless.  
Nothing can blind a mortal like to light.  
Now Love in you is as the Sun—a thing 80  
Beyond you—and your Jealousy 's of Earth—

1. [Lucifer or Mephistopheles, renamed Cæsar, wears the shape of the Deformed Arnold. It may be that Byron intended to make Olimpia bestow her affections, not on the glorious Achilles, but the witty and interesting Hunchback.]



A cloud of your own raising.

*Arn.*

Not so always !

There is a cause at times.

*Cæs.*

Oh, yes ! when atoms jostle,  
The System is in peril. But I speak  
Of things you know not. Well, to earth again !  
This precious thing of dust—this bright Olimpia—  
This marvellous Virgin, is a marble maid—  
An Idol, but a cold one to your heat  
Promethean, and unkindled by your torch.

*Arn.* Slave !

*Cæs.* In the victor's Chariot, when Rome triumphed,  
There was a Slave of yore to tell him truth ! 91  
You are a Conqueror—command your Slave.

*Arn.* Teach me the way to win the woman's love.

*Cæs.* Leave her.

*Arn.* Were that the path—I'd not pursue it.

*Cæs.* No doubt ! for if you did, the remedy  
Would be for a disease already cured.

*Arn.* All wretched as I am, I would not quit  
My unrequited love, for all that 's happy.

*Cæs.* You have possessed the woman—still possess.  
What need you more ?

*Arn.*

To be myself possessed— 100  
To be her heart as she is mine.

# THE AGE OF BRONZE;

OR,

CARMEN SECLARE ET ANNUS HAUD  
MIRABILIS.<sup>1</sup>

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"Impar Congressus Achilli." <sup>1</sup>

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i. [*Annus Mirabilis*.—MS.]

1. [It has been suggested by Dr. Garnett (late keeper of the Printed Books in the British Museum) that the motto to *The Age of Bronze* may, possibly, contain a reference to the statue of Achilles, "inscribed by the women of England to Arthur, Duke of Wellington, and his brave companions in arms," which was erected in Hyde Park, June 18, 1822.]



## INTRODUCTION TO THE AGE OF BRONZE.

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*THE Age of Bronze* was begun in December, 1822, and finished on January 10, 1823. "I have sent," he writes (letter to Leigh Hunt, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 160), "to Mrs. S[helley], for the benefit of being copied, a poem of about seven hundred and fifty lines length—*The Age of Bronze*,—or *Carmen Seculare et Annus haud Mirabilis*, with this Epigraph—'Impar Congressus Achilli.' It is calculated for the reading part of the million, being all on politics, etc., etc., etc., and a review of the day in general,—in my early *English Bards* style, but a little more stilted, and somewhat too full of 'epithets of war' and classical and historical allusions. If notes are necessary, they can be added."

On March 5th he forwarded the "Proof in Slips" ("and certainly the *Slips* are the most conspicuous part of it") to his new publisher, John Hunt; and, on April 1, 1823, *The Age of Bronze* was published, but not with the author's name.

Ten years had gone by since he had published, only to disclaim, the latest of his boyish satires, *The Waltz*, and more than six years since he had written, "at the request of Douglas Kinnaird," the stilted and laboured *Monody on the Death of . . . Sheridan*. In the interval (1816–1822) he had essayed any and every measure but the heroic, and, at length, as a tardy recognition of his allegiance to "the great moral poet of all times, of all climes, of all feelings, and of all stages of existence" (*Observations upon "Observations," Letters*, 1901, v. 590), he reverts, as he believes, to his "early *English Bards* style," the style of Pope.

The brazen age, the "*Annus Haud Mirabilis*," which the satirist would hold up to scorn, was 1822, the year after Napoleon's death, which witnessed a revolution in Spain, and the Congress of Allied Sovereigns at Verona. Earlier in the year, the publication of Las Cases' *Mémorial de S<sup>te</sup> Hélène*, and of O'Meara's *Napoleon in Exile, or a Voice from St. Helena*, had created a sensation on both sides of

the Channel. Public opinion had differed as to the system on which Napoleon should be treated—and, since his death, there had been a conflict of evidence as to the manner in which he had been treated, at St. Helena. Tories believed that an almost excessive lenience and indulgence had been wasted on a graceless and thankless intriguer, while the "Opposition," Liberals or Radicals, were moved to indignation at the hardships and restrictions which were ruthlessly and needlessly imposed on a fallen and powerless foe. It was, and is, a very pretty quarrel; and Byron, whose lifelong admiration for his "Héros de Roman" was tempered by reason, approached the Longwood controversy somewhat in the spirit of a partisan.

In *The Age of Bronze* (sects. iii.-v.) he touches on certain incidents of the "Last Phase" of Napoleon's career, and proceeds to recapitulate, in a sort of *Memoria Technica*, the chief events of his history, from the dawn at Marengo to the sunset at "bloody and most bootless Waterloo," and draws the unimpeachable moral that "Honesty is the best policy," even when the "game is Empire" and "the stakes are thrones"!

From the rise and fall, the tyranny and captivity of Napoleon, he passes on to the Congress of Allied Powers, which met at Verona in November, 1822.

The "Congress" is the object of his satire. It had assembled with a parade of power and magnificence, and had dispersed with little or nothing accomplished. It was "impar Achilli" (*vide ante*, p. 535, *note 1*), an empty menace, ill-matched with the revolutionary spirit, and in pitiful contrast to the *Sic volo, sic jubeo* of the dead Napoleon.

The immediate and efficient cause of the Congress of Verona was the success of the revolution in Spain. The point at issue between Spanish Liberals and Royalists, or *serviles*, was the adherence to, or the evasion of, the democratic Constitution of 1812. At the moment the Liberals were in the ascendant, and, as Chateaubriand puts it, had driven King Ferdinand into captivity, at Urgel, in Catalonia, to the tune of the Spanish Marseillaise, "*Tragala, Tragala*," "swallow it, swallow it," that is, "accept the Constitution." On July 7, 1822, a government was established under the name of the "Supreme Regency of Spain during the Captivity of the King," and, hence, the consternation of the partners of the Holy Alliance, especially France, who conceived, or feigned to conceive, that revolution next door was a source of danger to constitutional government at home. To meet the emergency, a Congress was summoned in the first instance at Vienna, and afterwards at Verona.

Thither came the sovereigns of Europe, great and small, accompanied by their chancellors and ministers. The Czar Alexander was attended by Count Nesselrode and Count Pozzo di Borgo; the Emperor Francis of Austria, by Metternich and Prince Esterhazy; the King of Prussia (Frederic William III.), by Count Bernstorff and Baron Humboldt. George IV. of Great Britain, and Louis XVIII. of France, being elderly and gouty, sent as their plenipotentiaries the Duke of Wellington and the Vicomte de Montmorenci, accompanied, and, finally, superseded by, the French ambassador, M. de Chateaubriand. Thither, too, came the smaller fry, Kings of the Two Sicilies and of Sardinia; and last, but not least, Marie Louise of Austria, Archduchess of Parma, *ci-devant* widow of Napoleon, and wife *sub rosa* of her one-eyed chamberlain, Count de Neipperg. They met, they debated, they went to the theatre in state, and finally decided to send monitory despatches to Spain, and to leave to France a free hand to look after her own interests, and to go to war or not, as she was pleased to determine. There was one dissident, the Duke of Wellington, who refused to sign the *procès verbaux*. His Britannic Majesty had been advised to let the Spaniards alone, and not to meddle with their internal affairs. The final outcome of the Congress, the French invasion of Spain, could not be foreseen; and, apparently, all that the Congress had accomplished was to refuse to prohibit the exportation of negroes from Africa to America, and to decline to receive the Greek deputies.

As the *Morning Chronicle* (November 7, 1822) was pleased to put it, "the Royal vultures have been deprived of their anticipated meal."

From the Holy Alliance and its antagonist, "the revolutionary stork," Byron turns to the landed and agricultural "interest" of Great Britain. With the cessation of war and the resumption of cash payments in 1819, prices had fallen some 50 per cent., and rents were beginning to fall. Wheat, which in 1818 had fetched 80s. a quarter, in December, 1822, was quoted at 39s. 11d.; consols were at 80. Poor rates had risen from £2,000,000 in 1792 to £8,000,000 in 1822. How was the distress which these changes involved to be met? By retrenchment and reform, by the repeal of taxes, the reduction of salaries, by the landlords and farmers, who had profited by war prices, submitting to the inevitable reaction; or by sliding scales, by a return to an inflated currency, perhaps by a repudiation of a portion of the funded debt?

The point of Byron's diatribe is that Squire Dives had enjoyed good things during the war, and, now that the war was over, he had no intention to let Lazarus have his turn;

that, whoever suffered, it should not be Dives ; that patriotism had brought grist to his mill ; and that he proposed to suck no small advantage out of peace.

“ Year after year they voted cent. per cent.,  
 Blood, sweat, and tear-wrung millions—why? for rent?  
 They roared, they dined, they drank, they swore they meant  
 To die for England—why then live?—for rent ! ”

It is easier to divine the “ Sources ” and the inspiration of *The Age of Bronze* than to place the reader *au courant* with the literary and political *causerie* of the day. Byron wrote with O’Meara’s book at his elbow, and with batches of *Galighani’s Messenger*, the *Morning Chronicle*, and *Cobbett’s Weekly Register* within his reach. He was under the impression that his lines would appear as an anonymous contribution to *The Liberal*, and, in any case, he felt that he could speak out, unchecked and uncriticized by friend or publisher. He was, so to speak, unmuzzled.

With regard to the style and quality of his new satire, Byron was under an amiable delusion. His couplets, he imagined, were in his “ early *English Bards* style,” but “ more stilted.” He did not realize that, whatever the intervening years had taken away, they had “ left behind ” experience and passion, and that he had learned to think and to feel. The fault of the poem is that too much matter is packed into too small a compass, and that, in parts, every line implies a minute acquaintance with contemporary events, and requires an explanatory note. But, even so, in *The Age of Bronze* Byron has wedded “ a striking passage of history ” to striking and imperishable verse.

*The Age of Bronze* was reviewed in the *Scots Magazine*, April, 1823, N.S., vol. xii. pp. 483-488 ; the *Monthly Review*, April, 1823, E.S., vol. 100, pp. 430-433 ; the *Monthly Magazine*, May, 1823, vol. 55, pp. 322-325 ; the *Examiner*, March 30, 1823 ; the *Literary Chronicle*, April 5, 1823 ; and the *Literary Gazette*, April 5, 1823.

# THE AGE OF BRONZE.

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## I.

THE "good old times"—all times when old are good—  
Are gone ; the present might be if they would ;  
Great things have been, and are, and greater still  
Want little of mere mortals but their will :<sup>1</sup>  
A wider space, a greener field, is given  
To those who play their "tricks before high heaven."<sup>1</sup>  
I know not if the angels weep, but men  
Have wept enough—for what?—to weep again !

## II.

All is exploded—be it good or bad.  
Reader ! remember when thou wert a lad, 10  
Then Pitt was all ; or, if not all, so much,  
His very rival almost deemed him such.<sup>2</sup>  
We—we have seen the intellectual race  
Of giants stand, like Titans, face to face—  
Athos and Ida, with a dashing sea  
Of eloquence between, which flowed all free,  
As the deep billows of the Ægean roar  
Betwixt the Hellenic and the Phrygian shore.  
But where are they—the rivals ! a few feet  
Of sullen earth divide each winding sheet.<sup>3</sup> 20

i. *Want nothing of the little, but their will.*—[MS.]

1. [*Measure for Measure*, act ii. sc. 2, line 121.]

2. [Fox used to say, "I never want a word, but Pitt never wants the word."]

3. [The grave of Fox, in Westminster Abbey is within eighteen inches of that of Pitt. Compare—



How peaceful and how powerful is the grave,  
 Which hushes all ! a calm, unstormy wave,  
 Which oversweeps the World. The theme is old  
 Of "Dust to Dust," but half its tale untold :  
 Time tempers not its terrors—still the worm  
 Winds its cold folds, the tomb preserves its form,  
 Varied above, but still alike below ;  
 The urn may shine—the ashes will not glow—  
 Though Cleopatra's mummy cross the sea <sup>1</sup>  
 O'er which from empire she lured Anthony ;  
 Though Alexander's urn <sup>2</sup> a show be grown 30

"Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,  
 Because his rival slumbers nigh ;  
 Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,  
 Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.

Where,—taming thought to human pride !—  
 The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.  
 Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,  
 'Twill trickle to his rival's bier," etc.

*Marmion*, by Sir Walter Scott,  
 Introduction to Canto I. lines 125-128, 184-188.

Compare, too, Macaulay on Warren Hastings : "In that temple of silence and reconciliation, where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried, in the Great Abbey . . . the dust of the illustrious accused should have mingled with the dust of the illustrious accusers. This was not to be."—*Critical and Historical Essays*, 1843, iii. 465.]

1. [The Cleopatra whose mummy is preserved in the British Museum was a member of the Theban Archon family. Her date was *circa*. A.D. 100.]

2. [According to Strabo (*Rerum Geog.*, xvii. ed. 1807, ii. 1127), Ptolemæus Soter brought Alexander's body back from Babylon, and buried it in Alexandria, in the spot afterwards known as the *Soma*. There it lay, in Strabo's time, not in its original body-mask of golden chase-work, which Ptolemæus Cocces had stolen, but in a casket of glass. Great men "turned to pilgrims" to visit Alexander's grave. Augustus crowned the still life-like body with a golden laurel-wreath, and scattered flowers over the tomb : Caligula stole the breastplate, and wore it during his pantomimic triumphs ; Septimius Severus buried in the sarcophagus the writings of the priests, and a clue to the hieroglyphics. Finally, the sarcophagus and its sacred remains disappear, and Alexander himself passes into the land of fable and romance. In 1801 a sarcophagus came into the possession of the English Army, and was presented by George III. to the British Museum. Hieroglyphics were as yet undeciphered, and, in 1805, the traveller Edward Daniel Clarke published a quarto monograph (*The Tomb of Alexander, etc.*), in which he proves, to his own satisfaction, that "this surprising sarcophagus in one entire block of green Egyptian *breccia*," had once contained the ashes of Alexander the Great. Byron knew Clarke, and, no doubt, respected his authority (see letter December 15, 1813,

On shores he wept to conquer, though unknown—<sup>1</sup>  
 How vain, how worse than vain, at length appear  
 The madman's wish, the Macedonian's tear !  
 He wept for worlds to conquer—half the earth  
 Knows not his name, or but his death, and birth,  
 And desolation ; while his native Greece  
 Hath all of desolation, save its peace.  
 He " wept for worlds to conquer ! " he who ne'er  
 Conceived the Globe, he panted not to spare ! 40  
 With even the busy Northern Isle unknown,  
 Which holds his urn—and never knew his throne.

## III.

But where is he, the modern, mightier far,  
 Who, born no king, made monarchs draw his car ;  
 The new Sesostriis, whose unharnessed kings,<sup>2</sup>  
 Freed from the bit, believe themselves with wings,  
 And spurn the dust o'er which they crawled of late,  
 Chained to the chariot of the Chieftain's state ?

*Letters*, 1898, ii. 308) ; and, hence, the description of " Alexander's urn " as " a show." The sarcophagus which has, since 1844, been assigned to its rightful occupant, Nectanebus II. (Nekht-neb-f), is a conspicuous object in the Egyptian Gallery of the British Museum. It is a curious coincidence that in the Ethiopic version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes, Alexander is said to have been the son of Nectanebus II., who threw a spell over Olympias, the wife of Philip of Macedon, and won her love by the exercise of nefarious magic. (See the *Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great*, by E. A. Wallis Budge, Litt.D., F.S.A., Keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, 1896, i. ix.]

1. [Arrian (*Alexand. Anabasis*, vii. 1, 4, ed. 1849, p. 165) says that Alexander would never have rested content with what he had acquired ; " that if he had annexed Europe to Asia, and the British Isles to Europe, he would have sought out some no-man's-land to conquer." So insatiable was his ambition, that when the courtly philosopher Anaxarchus explained to him the theory of the plurality of worlds he bemoaned himself because as yet he was not master of one. "*Heu me, inquit, miserum, quod ne uno quidem adhuc potitus sum.*"—Valerius Maximus, *De Dictis*, etc., lib. viii. cap. xiv. ex. 2. See, too, *Juvenal*, x. 168, 169. Burton (*Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1893, i. 64) denies that this was spoken like a prince, but, as wise Seneca censures him [on another occasion, however], 'twas *vox iniquissima et stultissima*, "'twas spoken like a bedlam fool."]

2. [Compare *Werner*, act iii. sc. 1, lines 288, 289, "When he [Sesostriis] went into the temple or the city, his custom was to cause the horses to be unharnessed out of his chariot, and to yoke four kings and four princes to the chariot-pole."—Diodori Siculi *Bibl. Hist.*, lib. i. p. 37, C, ed. 1604, p. 53.]

Yes ! where is he, " the champion and the child " <sup>1</sup>  
 Of all that 's great or little—wise or wild ; 50  
 Whose game was Empire, and whose stakes were  
     thrones ;  
 Whose table Earth—whose dice were human bones ?  
 Behold the grand result in yon lone Isle,  
 And, as thy nature urges—weep or smile.  
 Sigh to behold the Eagle's lofty rage  
 Reduced to nibble at his narrow cage ;  
 Smile to survey the queller of the nations  
 Now daily squabbling o'er disputed rations ; <sup>2</sup>

i. Lines 55-58 not in MS.

1. [In a speech delivered in the House of Commons, February 17, 1800, "On the continuance of the War with France," Pitt described Napoleon as the "child and champion of Jacobinism." Coleridge, who was reporting for the *Morning Post*, took down Pitt's words as "nursling and champion" (unpublished MS. note-book), a finer and more original phrase, but substituted "child" for "nursling" in his "copy." (See *Letters of S. T. Coleridge*, 1895, i. 327, note 1.) The phrase was much in vogue, e.g. "All that survives of Jacobinism in Europe looks up to him as its 'child and champion.'"—*Quarterly Review*, xvi. 48. See, too, *Poetical Works*, 1898, ii. 400, note 1.]

2. [O'Meara, under the dates August 19, September 5, September 7, 13, etc. (see *Napoleon in Exile*, 1888, i. 95, 96, 114, 121, etc.), reports complaints on the part of Napoleon with regard to the reduction of expenses suggested or enforced by Sir Hudson Lowe, and gives specimens of the nature and detail of these reductions. For a refutation of O'Meara's facts and figures (as given in *Napoleon in Exile*, 1822, ii. Appendix V.), see the *History of the Captivity of Napoleon*, by William Forsyth, Q.C., 1853, iii. 121, sq. ; see, too, *Sir Hudson Lowe and Napoleon*, by R. C. Seaton, 1898). It is a fact that Sir Hudson Lowe, on his own responsibility, increased the allowance for the household expenses of Napoleon and his staff from £8000 to £12,000 a year, and it is also perfectly true that opportunities for complaint were welcomed by the ex-Emperor and his mimic court. It was *la politique de Longwood* to make the worst of everything, on the off-chance that England would get to hear, and that Radical indignation and Radical sympathy would gild, perhaps unbar, the eagle's cage. It is true, too, that a large sum of money was spent on behalf of a prisoner of war whom the stalwarts of the Tory party would have executed in cold blood. But it is also true that Napoleon had no need to manufacture complaints, that he was exposed to unnecessary discomforts, that useless and irritating precautions were taken to prevent his escape, that the bottles of champagne and madeira, the fowls and the bundles of wood were counted with an irritating preciseness, inconsistent with the general scale of expenditure, which saved a little waste, and covered both principals and agents with ridicule. It is said that O'Meara, in his published volumes, manipulated his evidence, and that his own letters give him the lie ; but there is a mass of correspondence, published and unpublished, between him and Sir Thomas Reade, Sir Hudson

Weep to perceive him mourning, as he dines,  
 O'er curtailed dishes and o'er stinted wines ; 60  
 O'er petty quarrels upon petty things.  
 Is this the Man who scourged or feasted kings ?  
 Behold the scales in which his fortune hangs,  
 A surgeon's <sup>1</sup> statement, and an earl's <sup>2</sup> harangues !  
 A bust delayed,<sup>3</sup>—a book <sup>4</sup> refused, can shake  
 The sleep of Him who kept the world awake.  
 Is this indeed the tamer of the Great,<sup>1</sup>  
 Now slave of all could tease or irritate—  
 The paltry gaoler <sup>5</sup> and the prying spy,

i. *Weep to survey the Tamer of the Great.*—[MS.]

Lowe, and Major Gorrequer (see Addit. MSS. Brit. Mus. 20,145), which remains as it was written, and which testifies to facts which might have been and were not refuted on the spot and at the moment. With regard to "disputed rations," the Governor should have been armed with a crushing answer to any and every complaint. As it was, he was able to show that champagne was allowed to "Napoleon Buonaparte," and that he did not exceed his allowance.]

1. [In his correspondence with Lord Bathurst, Sir Hudson Lowe more than once quotes "statements" made by Dr. O'Meara (*vide post*, p. 546). But the surgeon may be William Warden (1777-1849), whose *Letters written on board His Majesty's Ship the Northumberland, and at St. Helena*, were published in 1816.]

2. [Henry, Earl of Bathurst (1762-1834), Secretary for War and the Colonies, replied to Lord Holland's motion "for papers connected with the personal treatment of Napoleon Buonaparte at St. Helena," March 18, 1817. *Parl. Deb.*, vol. 35, pp. 1137-1166.]

3. [A bust of Napoleon's son, the Duke of Reichstadt, had been forwarded to St. Helena. O'Meara (*Napoleon in Exile, etc.*, 1822, i. p. 100) says "that it had been in the island fourteen days, during several of which it was at Plantation House," before it was transferred to Longwood. Forsyth (*History of Napoleon in Captivity*, 1853, ii. 146) denies this statement. It was, no doubt, detained on board ship for inspection, but not at Plantation House.]

4. [The book in question was *The Substance of some Letters written by an Englishman in Paris*, 1816 (by J. C. Hobhouse). It was inscribed "To the Emperor Napoleon." Lowe's excuse was that Hobhouse had submitted the work to his inspection, and suggested that if the Governor did not think fit to give it to Napoleon, he might place it in his own library. (See *Napoleon in Exile*, 1822, i. 85-87; and Forsyth, 1853, i. 193-1)]

5. [Lieutenant-General Sir Hudson Lowe, K.C.B. (1769-1844), was the son of an army surgeon, John Hudson Lowe. His mother was Irish. He was appointed Governor of St. Helena, August 23, 1815, and landed in the island April 14, 1816. Byron met him at Lord Holland's, before he sailed for St. Helena, and was not impressed by his remarks on Napoleon and Waterloo (*Letters*, 1901, v. 429). He was well-intentioned, honourable, and, in essentials, humane, but he was arrogant and tactless. The following sentence, from a letter

The staring stranger with his note-book nigh ?<sup>1</sup> 70  
 Plunged in a dungeon, he had still been great ;  
 How low, how little was this middle state,  
 Between a prison and a palace, where  
 How few could feel for what he had to bear !  
 Vain his complaint,—My Lord presents his bill,  
 His food and wine were doled out duly still ;  
 Vain was his sickness, never was a clime  
 So free from homicide—to doubt 's crime ;  
 And the stiff surgeon,<sup>2</sup> who maintained his cause,

written by Lowe to O'Meara, October 3, 1816 (Forsyth, i. 318, 319), is characteristic: "With respect to the instructions I have received, and my manner of making them known, never having regarded General Bonaparte's opinions in any point whatever as to *matter* or *manner*, as an oracle or criterion by which to regulate my own judgment, I am not disposed to think the less favourably of the instructions, or my mode of executing them." It must, however, be borne in mind that this was written some time after Lowe's fifth and last interview with his captive (Aug. 18, 1816); that Napoleon had abused him to his face and behind his back, and was not above resorting to paltry subterfuges in order to defy and exasperate his "paltry gaoler."

1. [There is reason to think that "the staring stranger" was the traveller Captain Basil Hall (1788-1844), who called upon Byron at Venice (see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 252), but did not see him. His account of his interview with Napoleon is attached to his narrative of a *Voyage to Java*, 1840. It is not included in the earlier editions of Hall's *Voyage to the Corea and the Loochoo Islands*, but is quoted by Scott, in his *Life of Napoleon*, 1827.]

2. [Barry Edward O'Meara (1786-1836) began life as assistant-surgeon to the 62nd Regiment, then stationed in Sicily and Calabria. In 1815 he was surgeon on board the *Bellerophon*, under Captain F. L. Maitland. Napoleon took a fancy to him because he could speak Italian, and, as his own surgeon Ménégaud would not follow him into exile, requested that O'Meara might accompany him, in the *Northumberland*, to St. Helena. His position was an ambiguous one. He was to act as Napoleon's medical and, *quoad hoc*, confidential attendant, but he was not to be subservient to him or dependent on him. At St. Helena Lowe expected him to be something between an intermediary and a spy, and, for a time, O'Meara discharged both functions to the Governor's satisfaction (statements by Dr. O'Meara are quoted by Lowe in his letter to Lord Bathurst [*Life of Napoleon*, etc., by Sir W. Scott, 1828, p. 763]). As time went on, the surgeon yielded to the glamour of Napoleon's influence, and more and more disliked and resented the necessity of communicating private conversations to Lowe. He "withheld his confidence," with the result that the Governor became suspicious, and treated O'Meara with reprobation and contempt. At length, on July 18, 1818, on a renewed accusation of "irregularities," Lord Bathurst dismissed him from his post, and ordered him to quit St. Helena. He returned to England, and, October 28, 1818, addressed a letter (see Forsyth's *Napoleon*, etc., iii. 432, 433) to J. W. Croker, the Secretary to the Admiralty, in which he

Hath lost his place, and gained the world's applause. 80  
 But smile—though all the pangs of brain and heart  
 Disdain, defy, the tardy aid of art ;  
 Though, save the few fond friends and imaged face  
 Of that fair boy his Sire shall ne'er embrace,  
 None stand by his low bed—though even the mind  
 Be wavering, which long awed and awes mankind :  
 Smile—for the fettered Eagle breaks his chain,  
 And higher Worlds than this are his again.<sup>1</sup>

## IV.

How, if that soaring Spirit still retain  
 A conscious twilight of his blazing reign, 90  
 How must he smile, on looking down, to see  
 The little that he was and sought to be !  
 What though his Name a wider empire found  
 Than his Ambition, though with scarce a bound ;  
 Though first in glory, deepest in reverse,  
 He tasted Empire's blessings and its curse ;  
 Though kings, rejoicing in their late escape  
 From chains, would gladly be *their* Tyrant's ape ;  
 How must he smile, and turn to yon lone grave,  
 The proudest Sea-mark that o'ertops the wave ! 100  
 What though his gaoler, duteous to the last,  
 Scarce deemed the coffin's lead could keep him fast,  
 Refusing one poor line<sup>2</sup> along the lid,

argued against the justice of his dismissal. One sentence which asserted that Lowe had dwelt upon the "benefit which would result to Europe from the death of Napoleon," was seized upon by Croker as calumnious, and in answer to his remonstrance, O'Meara's name was struck off the list of naval surgeons. He published, in 1819, a work entitled *Exposition of some of the Transactions that have taken place at St. Helena since the appointment of Sir Hudson Lowe as Governor*, which was afterwards expanded into *Napoleon in Exile, or a Voice from St. Helena* (2 vols., 1822). The latter work made a great sensation, and passed through five editions. It was republished in 1888. O'Meara was able, and generously disposed, but he was not "stiff" (*vide infra*, 489). "He was," says Lord Rosebery (*Napoleon, The Last Phase*, 1900, p. 31), "the confidential servant of Napoleon : unknown to Napoleon, he was the confidential agent of Lowe ; and behind both their backs he was the confidential informant of the British Government. . . . Testimony from such a source is . . . tainted." Neither men nor angels will disentangle the wheat from the tares.]

1. [Bonaparte died the 5th of May, 1821.]

2. [At the end of vol. ii. of O'Meara's *Voice, etc.* (ed. 5), there is a

To date the birth and death of all it hid ;  
 That name shall hallow the ignoble shore,  
 A talisman to all save him who bore :  
 The fleets that sweep before the eastern blast  
 Shall hear their sea-boys <sup>1</sup> hail it from the mast ;  
 When Victory's Gallic column <sup>2</sup> shall but rise,  
 Like Pompey's pillar, <sup>3</sup> in a desert's skies,                    110  
 The rocky Isle that holds or held his dust,  
 Shall crown the Atlantic like the Hero's bust,  
 And mighty Nature o'er his obsequies  
 Do more than niggard Envy still denies.  
 But what are these to him? Can Glory's lust  
 Touch the freed spirit or the fettered dust ?  
 Small care hath he of what his tomb consists ;  
 Nought if he sleeps—nor more if he exists :  
 Alike the better-seeing Shade will smile  
 On the rude cavern <sup>4</sup> of the rocky isle,                    120  
 As if his ashes found their latest home  
 In Rome's Pantheon or Gaul's mimic dome.<sup>5</sup>

statement, signed by Count Montholon, to the effect that he wished the following inscription to be placed on Napoleon's coffin—

" Napoléon.  
 Né à Ajaccio le 15 Août, 1769,  
 Mort à Ste. Hélène le 5 Mai, 1821 ; "

but that the Governor said, " that his instructions would not allow him to sanction any other name being placed on the coffin than that of 'General Bonaparte.' " Lowe would have sanctioned " Napoléon Bonaparte," but, on his own admission, *did* refuse the inscription of the one word " Napoléon."—Forsyth, iii. 295, 296, note 3.]

1. [Hall, in his interview with Napoleon at St. Helena, *Narrative of a Voyage to Java*, 1840, p. 77, testifies that, weeks before the vessel anchored at St. Helena, August 11, 1817, "the probability of seeing him [Napoleon] had engrossed the thoughts of every one on board. . . . Even those of our number who, from their situation, could have no chance of seeing him, caught the fever of the moment, and the most cold and indifferent person on board was roused on the occasion into unexpected excitement."]

2. [The Colonne Vendôme, erected to commemorate the Battle of Austerlitz, was inaugurated in 1810.]

3. [Pompey's, *i.e.* Diocletian's Pillar stands on a mound near the Arabian cemetery, about three quarters of a mile from Alexandria, between the city and Lake Mareotis.]

4. [Napoleon was buried, May 9, 1821, in a garden in the middle of a deep ravine, under the shade of two willow trees.]

5. [Byron took for granted that Napoleon's remains would one day rest under the dome of the Pantheon, where Mirabeau is buried, and where cenotaphs have been erected to Voltaire and Rousseau. As it is

He wants not this ; but France shall feel the want  
 Of this last consolation, though so scant :  
 Her Honour—Fame—and Faith demand his bones,  
 To rear above a Pyramid of thrones ;  
 Or carried onward in the battle's van,  
 To form, like Guesclin's dust, her Talisman.<sup>1</sup>  
 But be it as it is—the time may come  
 His name shall beat the alarm, like Ziska's drum.<sup>2</sup> 130

## V.

Oh Heaven ! of which he was in power a feature ;  
 Oh Earth ! of which he was a noble creature ;  
 Thou Isle ! to be remembered long and well,  
 That saw'st the unfledged eaglet chip his shell !  
 Ye Alps which viewed him in his dawning flights  
 Hover, the Victor of a hundred fights !

(since December 15, 1840) he sleeps under the Dôme des Invalides. Above the entrance are these words, which are taken from his will : " Je désire que mes cendres reposent sur les bords de la Seine, au milieu de ce peuple Français que j'ai tant aimé." ]

1. Guesclin died during the siege of a city ; it surrendered, and the keys were brought and laid upon his bier, so that the place might appear rendered to his ashes. [Bertrand du Guesclin, born 1320, first distinguished himself in the service of King John II. of France, in defending Rennes against Henry Duke of Lancaster, 1356-57. He was made Constable of France in 1370, and died before the walls of Châteauneuf-de-Randon (Lozère), July 13, 1380. He was buried by the order of Charles V. in Saint-Denis, hard by the tomb which the king had built for himself. In *La Vie vaillant Bertran du Guesclin* [*Chronique, etc.* (par E. Charrière), 1839, tom. ii. p. 321, lines 22716, sq.], the English do not place the keys of the castle on Du Guesclin's bier, but present them to him as he lies tossing on his death-bed ("à son lit agité"). So, too, *Histoire de Messire Bertrand du Guesclin*, par Claude Menard, 1618, 540 : " Et Engloiz se accorderent à ce faire. Lors issirent dudit Chastel, et vindrent à Bertran, et lui presenterent les clefs. Et ne demora guères, qu'il getta le souppir de la mort." ]

2. [John of Trocnow, surnamed Zizka, or the "One-eyed," was born circ. 1360, and died while he was besieging a town on the Moravian border, October 11, 1424. He was the hero of the Hussite or Taborite crusade (1419-1422), the *malleus Catholicorum*. The story is that on his death-bed he was asked where he wished to be buried, and replied, "that it mattered not, that his flesh might be thrown to the vultures and eagles ; but his skin was to be carefully preserved and made into a drum, to be carried in the front of the battle, that the very sound might disperse their enemies." Voltaire, in his *Essai sur Les Mœurs et L'Esprit des Nations* (cap. lxxiii. s.f. *Œuvres Complètes, etc.*, 1836, iii. 256), mentions the legend as a fact, " Il ordonna qu'après sa mort on fit un tambour de sa peau." Compare *Werner*, act i. sc. 1, lines 693, 694.]



Thou Rome, who saw'st thy Cæsar's deeds outdone !  
 Alas ! why passed he too the Rubicon—  
 The Rubicon of Man's awakened rights,  
 To herd with vulgar kings and parasites ? 140  
 Egypt ! from whose all dateless tombs arose  
 Forgotten Pharaohs from their long repose,  
 And shook within their pyramids to hear  
 A new Cambyzes thundering in their ear ;  
 While the dark shades of Forty Ages stood  
 Like startled giants by Nile's famous flood ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Or from the Pyramid's tall pinnacle  
 Beheld the desert peopled, as from hell,  
 With clashing hosts, who strewed the barren sand,  
 To re-manure the uncultivated land ! 150  
 Spain ! which, a moment mindless of the Cid,  
 Beheld his banner flouting thy Madrid !<sup>2</sup>  
 Austria ! which saw thy twice-ta'en capital<sup>3</sup>  
 Twice spared to be the traitress of his fall !  
 Ye race of Frederic !—Frederics but in name  
 And falsehood—heirs to all except his fame :  
 Who, crushed at Jena, crouched at Berlin,<sup>4</sup> fell  
 First, and but rose to follow ! Ye who dwell  
 Where Kosciusko dwelt, remembering yet  
 The unpaid amount of Catherine's bloody debt !<sup>5</sup> 160

1. ["Au moment de la bataille Napoléon avait dit à ses troupes, en leur montrant les Pyramides : 'Soldats, quarante siècles vous regardent.'"—*Campagnes d'Égypte et de Syrie*, 1798-9, par le Général Bertrand, 1847, i. 160.]

2. [Madrid was taken by the French, first in March, 1808, and again December 2, 1808.]

3. [Vienna was taken by the French under Murat, November 14, 1805, evacuated January 12, 1806, captured by Napoleon, May, 1809, and restored at the conclusion of peace, October 14, 1809. Her treachery consisted in her hospitality to the sovereigns at the Congress of Vienna, November, 1814, and her share in the Treaty of Vienna, March 25, 1815, which ratified the Treaties of Chaumont, March 1, and of Paris, April 11, 1814.]

4. [At Jena Napoleon defeated Prince Hohenlohe, and at Auerstadt General Davoust defeated the King of Prussia, October 14, 1806. Napoleon then advanced to Berlin, October 27, from which he issued his famous decree against British commerce, November 20, 1806.]

5. [The partition of Poland. "Henry [of Prussia] arrived at St. Petersburg, December 9, 1770; and it seems now to be certain that the first open proposal of a dismemberment of Poland arose in his conversations with the Empress. . . . Catherine said to the Prince, 'I will frighten Turkey and flatter England. It is your business to gain

Poland ! o'er which the avenging Angel past,  
 But left thee as he found thee,<sup>1</sup> still a waste,  
 Forgetting all thy still enduring claim,  
 Thy lotted people and extinguished name,  
 Thy sigh for freedom, thy long-flowing tear,  
 That sound that crashes in the tyrant's ear—  
 Kosciusko !<sup>2</sup> On—on—on—the thirst of War  
 Gasps for the gore of serfs and of their Czar.  
 The half barbaric Moscow's minarets  
 Gleam in the sun, but 'tis a sun that sets ! 170  
 Moscow ! thou limit of his long career,  
 For which rude Charles had wept his frozen tear<sup>3</sup>  
 To see in vain—he saw thee—how ? with spire  
 And palace fuel to one common fire.  
 To this the soldier lent his kindling match,  
 To this the peasant gave his cottage thatch,

Austria, that she may lull France to sleep ;' and she became at length so eager, that . . . she dipt her finger into ink, and drew with it the lines of partition on a map of Poland which lay before them."—*Edinburgh Review*, November, 1822 (art. x. on *Histoire des Trois Démembrements de la Pologne*, par M. Ferrand, 1820, etc., vol. 37, pp. 479, 480.)

1. [Napoleon promised much, but did little for the Poles. "In speaking of the business of Poland he . . . said it was a whim (*c'était un caprice*)."—*Narrative of an Embassy to Warsaw*, by M. Dufour de Pradt, 1816, p. 51. "The Polish question," says Lord Wolseley (*Decline and Fall of Napoleon*, 1895, p. 19), "thrust itself most inconveniently before him. In early life all his sympathies . . . were with the Poles, and he had regarded the partition of their country as a crime. . . . As a very young man liberty was his only religion ; but he had now learned to hate and to fear that term. . . . He had no desire . . . to be the Don Quixote of Poland by reconstituting it as a kingdom. To fight Russia by the re-establishment of Polish independence was not, therefore, to be thought of."]

2. [The final partition of Poland took place after the Battle of Maciejowice, October 12, 1794, when "Freedom shrieked when Kosciusko fell." Tyrants, e.g. Napoleon in 1806, and Alexander in 1814 and again in 1815, approached Kosciusko with respect, and loaded him with flattery and promises, and then "passed by on the other side."]

3. [The reference is to Charles's chagrin when the Grand Vizier allowed the Russians to retire in safety from the banks of the Pruth, and assented to the Treaty of Jassy, July 21, 1711. Charles, "impatient for the fight, and to behold the enemy in his power," had ridden above fifty leagues from Bender to Jassy, swam the Pruth at the risk of his life, and found that the Czar had marched off in triumph. He contrived to rip up the Vizier's robe with his spur, "*remonta à cheval, et retourna à Bender le désespoir dans le cœur*" (*Histoire de Charles XII.*, Livre v. s.f.).]

To this the merchant flung his hoarded store,  
 The prince his hall—and Moscow was no more !  
 Sublimest of volcanoes ! Etna's flame  
 Pales before thine, and quenchless Hecla 's tame ; 180  
 Vesuvius shows his blaze,<sup>1</sup> an usual sight  
 For gaping tourists, from his hackneyed height :<sup>1</sup>  
 Thou stand'st alone unrivalled, till the Fire  
 To come, in which all empires shall expire !

Thou other Element ! as strong and stern,  
 To teach a lesson conquerors will not learn !—  
 Whose icy wing flapped o'er the faltering foe,  
 Till fell a hero with each flake of snow ;  
 How did thy numbing beak and silent fang,  
 Pierce, till hosts perished with a single pang ! 190  
 In vain shall Seine look up along his banks  
 For the gay thousands of his dashing ranks !  
 In vain shall France recall beneath her vines  
 Her Youth—their blood flows faster than her wines ;  
 Or stagnant in their human ice remains  
 In frozen mummies on the Polar plains.  
 In vain will Italy's broad sun awaken  
 Her offspring chilled ; its beams are now forsaken.  
 Of all the trophies gathered from the war,  
 What shall return ? the Conqueror's broken car !<sup>2</sup> 200  
 The Conqueror's yet unbroken heart ! Again

i. *For staring tourists* —.—[MS.]

1. ["Naples, October 29, 1822. Le Vésuve continue à lancer des pierres et des cendres."—From *Le Moniteur Universel*, November 21, 1822.]

2. [The material for this description of Napoleon on his return from Moscow is drawn from De Pradt's *Narrative of an Embassy to Warsaw and Wilna*, published in 1816, pp. 133-141. "I hurried out, and arrived at the Hôtel d'Angleterre . . . [Warsaw, December 10, 1812]. I saw a small carriage body placed on a sledge made of four pieces of fir: it had stood some crashes, and was much damaged. . . . The ministers joined me in addressing to him . . . wishes for the preservation of his health and the prosperity of his journey. He replied, 'I never was better; if I carried the devil with me, I should be all the better for that [*Quand j'aurai le diable je ne m'en porterai que mieux*].' These were his last words. He then mounted the humble sledge, which bore Cæsar and his fortune, and disappeared." The passage is quoted in the *Quarterly Review*, October, 1815, vol. xiv. pp. 64-68.]

The horn of Roland <sup>1</sup> sounds, and not in vain.  
 Lutzen, where fell the Swede of victory,<sup>2</sup>  
 Beholds him conquer, but, alas ! not die :  
 Dresden <sup>3</sup> surveys three despots fly once more  
 Before their sovereign,—sovereign as before ;<sup>4</sup>  
 But there exhausted Fortune quits the field,  
 And Leipsic's <sup>4</sup> treason bids the unvanquished yield ;  
 The Saxon jackal leaves the lion's side  
 To turn the bear's, and wolf's, and fox's guide ;      210  
 And backward to the den of his despair  
 The forest monarch shrinks, but finds no lair !

Oh ye ! and each, and all ! Oh France ! who found  
 Thy long fair fields ploughed up as hostile ground,  
 Disputed foot by foot, till Treason, still  
 His only victor, from Montmartre's hill <sup>5</sup>  
 Looked down o'er trampled Paris ! and thou Isle,  
 Which seest Etruria from thy ramparts smile,  
 Thou momentary shelter of his pride,  
 Till wooed by danger, his yet weeping bride !      220  
 Oh, France ! retaken by a single march,

i. *Dresden beholds three nations fly once more  
 Before the lash they oft had felt before.*—[MS. erased.]

1. ["Soldats Français ! Serrez vos rangs !  
 Entendez Roland qui vous crie !  
 Armez vous contre vos tyrans !  
 Brisez les fers de la patrie."]

"L'Ombre de Roland," *Morning Chronicle*, October 10, 1822.]

2. [Gustavus Adolphus fell at the great battle of Lutzen, in November, 1632. Napoleon defeated the allied Russian and Prussian armies at Lutzen, May 2, 1813.]

3. [On June 26, 1813, Napoleon re-entered Dresden, and on the 27th repulsed the allied sovereigns, the Emperors of Russia and Prussia, with tremendous loss. Thousands of prisoners and a great quantity of cannon were taken.]

4. [At the battle of Leipzig, October 18, 1813, on the appearance of Bernadotte, the Saxon soldiers under Regnier deserted and went over to the Allies. Napoleon, whose army was already weakened, lost 30,000 men at Leipzig.]

5. [Joseph Buonaparte, who had been stationed on the heights of Montmartre, March 30, 1814, to witness if not direct the defence of Paris against the Allies under Blücher, authorized Marmont to capitulate. His action was, unjustly, regarded as a betrayal of his brother's capital.]

Whose path was through one long triumphal arch !  
 Oh bloody and most bootless Waterloo !  
 Which proves how fools may have their fortune too,  
 Won half by blunder, half by treachery :  
 Oh dull Saint Helen ! with thy gaoler nigh—  
 Hear ! hear Prometheus<sup>1</sup> from his rock appeal  
 To Earth,—Air,—Ocean,—all that felt or feel  
 His power and glory, all who yet shall hear  
 A name eternal as the rolling year ; 230  
 He teaches them the lesson taught so long,  
 So oft, so vainly—learn to do no wrong !  
 A single step into the right had made  
 This man the Washington of worlds betrayed :  
 A single step into the wrong has given  
 His name a doubt to all the winds of heaven ;  
 The reed of Fortune, and of thrones the rod,  
 Of Fame the Moloch or the demigod ;  
 His country's Cæsar, Europe's Hannibal,  
 Without their decent dignity of fall. 240  
 Yet Vanity herself had better taught  
 A surer path even to the fame he sought,  
 By pointing out on History's fruitless page  
 Ten thousand conquerors for a single sage.  
 While Franklin's quiet memory climbs to Heaven,  
 Calming the lightning which he thence hath riven,  
 Or drawing from the no less kindled earth  
 Freedom and peace to that which boasts his birth ;<sup>2</sup>  
 While Washington's a watchword, such as ne'er

1. I refer the reader to the first address of Prometheus in Æschylus, when he is left alone by his attendants, and before the arrival of the chorus of Sea-nymphs.—*Prometheus Vinculus*, line 88, sq.

2. [Franklin published his *Opinions and Conjectures concerning the Properties and Effects of the Electrical Matter and the Means of preserving Buildings, Ships, etc., from Lightning*, in 1751, and in June, 1752, "the immortal kite was flown." It was in 1781, when he was minister plenipotentiary at the Court of France, that the Latin hexameter, "Eripuit cœlo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis," first applied to him by Turgot, was affixed to his portrait by Fragonard. The line, said to be an adaptation of a line in the *Astronomicum* of Manilius (lib. i. 104), descriptive of the Reason, "Eripuitque Jovi fulmen viresque tonandi," was turned into French by Nogaret, d'Alembert, and other wits and scholars. It appears on the reverse of a medal by F. Dupré, dated 1786. (See *Works of Benjamin Franklin*, edited by Jared Sparks, 1840, viii. 537-539 ; *Life and Times, etc.*, by James Parton, 1864, i. 285-291.)]

Shall sink while there 's an echo left to air : <sup>1</sup> 250  
 While even the Spaniard's thirst of gold and war  
 Forgets Pizarro to shout Bolivar ! <sup>2</sup>  
 Alas ! why must the same Atlantic wave  
 Which wafted freedom gird a tyrant's grave—  
 The king of kings, and yet of slaves the slave,  
 Who burst the chains of millions to renew  
 The very fetters which his arm broke through,  
 And crushed the rights of Europe and his own,  
 To flit between a dungeon and a throne ?

## VI.

But 'twill not be—the spark 's awakened—lo ! 260  
 The swarthy Spaniard feels his former glow ;  
 The same high spirit which beat back the Moor  
 Through eight long ages of alternate gore  
 Revives—and where ? in that avenging clime  
 Where Spain was once synonymous with crime,  
 Where Cortes' and Pizarro's banner flew,  
 The infant world redeems her name of "*New*."  
 'Tis the *old* aspiration breathed afresh,  
 To kindle souls within degraded flesh,  
 Such as repulsed the Persian from the shore 270  
 Where Greece *was*—No ! she still is Greece once more.  
 One common cause makes myriads of one breast,  
 Slaves of the East, or helots of the West :  
 On Andes' <sup>3</sup> and on Athos' peaks unfurled,

1. ["To be the first man—not the Dictator, not the Sylla, but the Washington, or the Aristides, the leader in talent and truth—is next to the Divinity."—Journal, November 24, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 340.]

2. [Simon Bolivar (*El Libertador*), 1783–1830, was at the height of his power and fame at the beginning of 1823. In 1821 he had united New Grenada to Venezuela under the name of the Republic of Columbia, and on the 1st of September he made a solemn entry into Lima. He was greeted with acclaim, but in accepting the honours which his fellow-citizens showered upon him, he warned them against the dangers of tyranny. "Beware," he said, "of a Napoleon or an Iturbide." Byron, at one time, had a mind to settle in "Bolivar's country" (letter to Ellice, June 12, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 89) ; and he christened his yacht *The Bolivar*.]

3. [A proclamation of Bolivar's, dated June 8, 1822, runs thus : "Columbians, now all your delightful country is free. . . . From the banks of the Orinoco to the Andes of Peru, the . . . army marching in triumph has covered with its protecting arms the entire extent of

The self-same standard streams o'er either world ;  
 The Athenian <sup>1</sup> wears again Harmodius' sword ;  
 The Chili chief <sup>2</sup> abjures his foreign lord ;  
 The Spartan knows himself once more a Greek, <sup>3</sup>  
 Young Freedom plumes the crest of each cacique ;  
 Debating despots, hemmed on either shore, 280  
 Shrink vainly from the roused Atlantic's roar ;

Columbia."—"Jamaica Papers," *Morning Chronicle*, September 28, 1822.]

1. [The capitulation of Athens was signed June 21, 1822. "Three days after the Greeks had sworn to observe the capitulation, they commenced murdering their helpless prisoners. . . . The streets of Athens were stained with the blood of four hundred men, women, and children." —*History of Greece*, by George Finlay, 1877, vi. 283. The sword was hid in the myrtle bough. Hence the allusion. (Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza xx. line 9, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 228, and 291, note 2.)]

2. [The independence of Chili dated from April 5, 1818, when General José de San Martín routed the Spanish army on the plains of Maypo. On the 28th of July, 1821, the Independence of Peru was proclaimed. General San Martín assumed the title of Protector, and, August 3, 4, 1821, issued proclamations, in which he announced the independence of Peru, and bade the Spaniards tremble if they "abused his indulgence." *Extracts from a Journal written on the Coast of Chili*, etc., by Captain Basil Hall, 1824, i. 266-272.]

3. [On the 8th of August, 1822, Niketas and Hypsilantes defeated the Turks under Dramali, near Lerna. The Moreotes attributed their good fortune to the generalship of Kolokotronis, a Messenian. Compare with the whole of section vi. the following quotations from an article on the "Numbers of the Greeks," which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, September 13, 1822—

" 'Trust not for freedom to the Franks,  
 They have a king who buys and sells ;  
 In native swords and native ranks  
 The only hope of courage dwells.'  
 Byron.

"As Russia has now removed her warlike projects, and the Greeks are engaged single-handed with the whole force of the Ottoman Empire, etc. . . . Byron's Grecian bard can no longer exclaim—

'My country ! on thy voiceless shore  
 The heroic lay is tuneless now—  
 The heroic bosom beats no more.'

"Greece is no longer a 'nation's sepulchre,' the foul abode of slaves, but the living theatre of the patriot's toils and the hero's achievements. Her banners once more float on the mountains, and the battles she has already won show that in every glen and valley, as well as on

'Suli's rock and Parga's shore  
 Exists the remnant of a line  
 Such as the Doric mothers bore.'"]

Through Calpe's strait the rolling tides advance,  
 Sweep slightly by the half-tamed land of France,  
 Dash o'er the old Spaniard's cradle, and would fain  
 Unite Ausonia to the mighty main :  
 But driven from thence awhile, yet not for aye,  
 Break o'er th' Ægean, mindful of the day  
 Of Salamis !—there, there the waves arise,  
 Not to be lulled by tyrant victories.  
 Lone, lost, abandoned in their utmost need 290  
 By Christians, unto whom they gave their creed,  
 The desolated lands, the ravaged isle,  
 The fostered feud encouraged to beguile,  
 The aid evaded, and the cold delay,  
 Prolonged but in the hope to make a prey ;—<sup>1</sup>  
 These, these shall tell the tale, and Greece can show  
 The false friend worse than the infuriate foe.  
 But this is well : Greeks only should free Greece,  
 Not the barbarian, with his masque of peace.  
 How should the Autocrat of bondage be 300  
 The king of serfs, and set the nations free ?  
 Better still serve the haughty Mussulman,  
 Than swell the Cossaque's prowling caravan ;  
 Better still toil for masters, than await,  
 The slave of slaves, before a Russian gate,—  
 Numbered by hordes, a human capital,  
 A live estate, existing but for thrall,  
 Lotted by thousands, as a meet reward  
 For the first courtier in the Czar's regard ;  
 While their immediate owner never tastes 310  
 His sleep, *sans* dreaming of Siberia's wastes :  
 Better succumb even to their own despair,  
 And drive the Camel—than purvey the Bear.

## VII.

But not alone within the hoariest clime  
 Where Freedom dates her birth with that of Time,  
 And not alone where, plunged in night, a crowd

1. [An account of these Russian intrigues in Greece is contained in Thomas Gordon's *History of the Greek Revolution*, 1832, i. 194-204.]



Of Incas darken to a dubious cloud,<sup>i</sup>  
 The dawn revives : renowned, romantic Spain  
 Holds back the invader from her soil again.  
 Not now the Roman tribe nor Punic horde<sup>ii</sup> 320  
 Demands her fields as lists to prove the sword ;  
 Not now the Vandal or the Visigoth  
 Pollute the plains, alike abhorring both ;<sup>iii</sup>  
 Nor old Pelayo<sup>1</sup> on his mountain rears  
 The warlike fathers of a thousand years.  
 That seed is sown and reaped, as oft the Moor  
 Sighs to remember on his dusky shore.  
 Long in the peasant's song or poet's page  
 Has dwelt the memory of Abencerrage ;  
 The Zegri,<sup>2</sup> and the captive victors, flung 330  
 Back to the barbarous realm from whence they sprung.  
 But these are gone—their faith, their swords, their sway,  
 Yet left more anti-christian foes than they ;<sup>iv</sup>  
 The bigot monarch, and the butcher priest,<sup>3</sup>  
 The Inquisition, with her burning feast,  
 The Faith's red "Auto," fed with human fuel,  
 While sate the catholic Moloch, calmly cruel,  
 Enjoying, with inexorable eye,<sup>v</sup>

i. *Of Incas known but as a cloud.*—[MS. erased.]

ii. *Not now the Roman or the Punic horde.*—[MS.]

iii. — *abhorrent of them both.*—[MS.]

iv. *And yet have left worse enemies than they.*—[MS. erased.]

v. *As rose on his remorseless ear the cry.*—[MS. erased.]

1. [Pelayo, said to be the son of Favila, Duke of Cantabria, was elected king by the Christians of the Asturias in 718, and defeated the Arab generals Suleyman and Manurza. He died A.D. 737.]

2. [For the "fabulous sketches" of the Zegri and Abencerrages, rival Moorish tribes, whose quarrels, at the close of the fifteenth century, deluged Granada with blood, see the *Civil Wars of Granada*, a prose fiction, interspersed with ballads, by Ginés Perez de Hita, published in 1595. An opera, *Les Abencerrages*, by Cherubini, was performed in Paris in 1813. Chateaubriand's *Les Aventures du dernier Abencerrage* was not published till 1826.]

3. [Ferdinand VII. returned to Madrid in March, 1814. "No sooner was he established on his throne . . . than he set himself to restore the old absolutism with its worst abuses. The nobles recovered their privileges . . . the Inquisition resumed its activity ; and the Jesuits returned to Spain. . . . A *camarilla* of worthless courtiers and priests conducted the government, and urged the king to fresh acts of revolutionary violence. For six years Spain groaned under a royalist 'reign of terror.'"—*Encycl. Brit.*, art. "Spain," vol. 22, p. 345.]

That fiery festival of Agony !  
 The stern or feeble sovereign, one or both 340  
 By turns ; the haughtiness whose pride was sloth ;  
 The long degenerate noble ; the debased  
 Hidalgo, and the peasant less disgraced,  
 But more degraded ; the unpeopled realm ;  
 The once proud navy which forgot the helm ;  
 The once impervious phalanx disarrayed ;  
 The idle forge that formed Toledo's blade ;  
 The foreign wealth that flowed on every shore,  
 Save hers who earned it with the native's gore ;  
 The very language which might vie with Rome's, 350  
 And once was known to nations like their homes,  
 Neglected or forgotten :—such *was* Spain ;  
 But such she is not, nor shall be again.  
 These worst, these *home* invaders, felt and feel  
 The new Numantine soul of old Castile,<sup>i</sup>  
 Up ! up again ! undaunted Tauridor !  
 The bull of Phalaris renews his roar ;<sup>ii</sup>  
 Mount, chivalrous Hidalgo ! not in vain  
 Revive the cry—" Jago ! and close Spain ! " <sup>1</sup>  
 Yes, close her with your armed bosoms round, 360  
 And form the barrier which Napoleon found,—  
 The exterminating war, the desert plain,  
 The streets without a tenant, save the slain ;  
 The wild Sierra, with its wilder troop <sup>iii</sup>  
 Of vulture-plumed Guerrillas, on the stoop <sup>iv</sup>  
 For their incessant prey ; the desperate wall  
 Of Saragossa, mightiest in her fall ;  
 The Man nerved to a spirit, and the Maid  
 Waving her more than Amazonian blade ;<sup>2</sup>  
 The knife of Arragon, Toledo's steel ; 370

i. *The re-awakened virtue* —.—[*MS. erased.*]

ii. — *is on the shore.*—[*MS. erased.*]

iii. *The wild Guerilla on Morena* —.—[*MS. erased.*]

iv. *Of eagle-eyed* —.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. " ' St. Jago and close Spain ! ' the old Spanish war-cry." [ " Santiago y serra España." ]

2. [Compare *Child's Harold*, Canto I. stanzas liv.-lvi., *Poetical Works*, i. 57, 58, 91, 92 (note 11). The " man " was Tio Jorge (Jorge Ibor), *vide ibid.*, p. 94.]

The famous lance of chivalrous Castile ;<sup>1</sup>  
 The unerring rifle of the Catalan ;  
 The Andalusian courser in the van ;  
 The torch to make a Moscow of Madrid ;  
 And in each heart the spirit of the Cid :—  
 Such have been, such shall be, such are. Advance,  
 And win—not Spain ! but thine own freedom, France !

## VIII.

But lo ! a Congress !<sup>2</sup> What ! that hallowed name  
 Which freed the Atlantic ! May we hope the same  
 For outworn Europe ? With the sound arise, 380  
 Like Samuel's shade to Saul's monarchic eyes,  
 The prophets of young Freedom, summoned far  
 From climes of Washington and Bolivar ;  
 Henry, the forest-born Demosthenes,  
 Whose thunder shook the Philip of the seas ;<sup>3</sup>  
 And stoic Franklin's energetic shade,

1. The Arragonians are peculiarly dexterous in the use of this weapon, and displayed it particularly in former French wars.

2. [*Vide ante*, the Introduction to the *Age of Bronze*, pp. 537-540.]

3. [Patrick Henry, born May 29, 1736, died June 6, 1799, was one of the leading spirits of the American Revolution. His father, John Henry, a Scotchman, a cousin of the historian, William Robertson, had acquired a small property in Virginia. Patrick was not exactly "forest born," but, as a child, loved to play truant "in the forest with his gun or over his angle-rod." He first came into notice as an orator in the "Parson's Cause," a suit brought by a minister of the Established Church to recover his salary, which had been fixed at 16,000 lbs. of tobacco. In his speech he is said to have struck the key-note of the Revolution by arguing that "a king, by disallowing acts of a salutary nature, from being the father of his people, degenerates into a tyrant, and forfeits all right to his subjects' obedience." His famous speech against the "Stamps Act" was delivered in the House of Burgesses of Virginia, May 29, 1765. One passage, with which, no doubt, Byron was familiar, has passed into history. "Cæsar had his Brutus—Charles the First had his Cromwell—and George the Third——" Henry was interrupted with a shout of "Treason! treason!!" but finished the sentence with, and "George the Third *may profit by their example*. If *this* be treason, make the most of it."

Henry was delegate to the first Continental Congress, five times Governor of Virginia, and was appointed U.S. Senator in 1794.

His contemporaries said that he was "the greatest orator that ever lived." He seems to have exercised a kind of magical influence over his hearers, which they could not explain, which charmed and overwhelmed them, and has left behind a tradition of bewitching persuasiveness and almost prophetic sublimity."—See *Life of Patrick Henry*, by William Wirt, 1845, *passim*.]

Robed in the lightnings which his hand allayed ;  
 And Washington, the tyrant-tamer, wake,  
 To bid us blush for these old chains, or break.  
 But *who* compose this Senate of the few 390  
 That should redeem the many? *Who* renew  
 This consecrated name, till now assigned  
 To councils held to benefit mankind?  
 Who now assemble at the holy call?  
 The blest Alliance, which says three are all !  
 An earthly Trinity ! which wears the shape  
 Of Heaven's, as man is mimicked by the ape.  
 A pious Unity ! in purpose one—  
 To melt three fools to a Napoleon.<sup>i</sup>  
 Why, Egypt's Gods were rational to these ; 400  
 Their dogs and oxen knew their own degrees,  
 And, quiet in their kennel or their shed,  
 Cared little, so that they were duly fed ;  
 But these, more hungry, must have something more—  
 The power to bark and bite, to toss and gore.  
 Ah, how much happier were good Æsop's frogs  
 Than we ! for ours are animated logs,  
 With ponderous malice swaying to and fro,  
 And crushing nations with a stupid blow ;  
 All dully anxious to leave little work 410  
 Unto the revolutionary stork.

## IX.

Thrice blest Verona ! since the holy three  
 With their imperial presence shine on thee !  
 Honoured by them, thy treacherous site forgets <sup>ii</sup>  
 The vaunted tomb of "all the Capulets !" <sup>1</sup>

i. — *to one Napoleon.*—[*MS. erased.*]

ii. — *thy poor old wall forgets.*—[*MS. erased.*]

i. ["I have been over Verona. The amphitheatre is wonderful—beats even Greece. Of the truth of Juliet's story they seem tenacious to a degree, insisting on the fact, giving a date (1303), and showing a tomb. It is a plain, open, and partly decayed sarcophagus, with withered leaves in it, in a wild and desolate conventual garden, once a cemetery, now ruined to the very graves. The situation struck me as very appropriate to the legend, being blighted as their love. . . . The Gothic monuments of the Scaliger princes pleased me, but 'a poor virtuoso am I.'"—Letter to Moore, November 7, 1816, *Letters*, 1899,

Thy Scaligers—for what was “Dog the Great,”  
 “Can Grande,”<sup>1</sup> (which I venture to translate,)  
 To these sublimer pugs? Thy poet too,  
 Catullus, whose old laurels yield to new;<sup>2</sup>  
 Thine amphitheatre, where Romans sate; 420  
 And Dante’s exile sheltered by thy gate;  
 Thy good old man, whose world was all within  
 Thy wall, nor knew the country held him in;<sup>3</sup>  
 Would that the royal guests it girds about  
 Were so far like, as never to get out!  
 Aye, shout! inscribe!<sup>4</sup> rear monuments of shame,  
 To tell Oppression that the world is tame!

iii. 386, 387. The tombs of the Scaligers are close to the Church of Santa Maria l’Antica. Juliet’s tomb, “of red Verona marble,” is in the garden of the *Orfanotrofio*, between the Via Cappucini and the Adige. It is not “that ancient vault where all the kindred of the Capulets lie,” which has long since been destroyed. Since 1814 Verona had been under Austria’s sway, and had “treacherously” forgotten her republican traditions.]

1. [Francesco Can Grande della Scala died in 1329. It was under his roof that Dante learned

“ . . . how salt his food who fares  
 Upon another’s bread—how steep his path  
 Who treadeth up and down another’s stairs.”

For anecdotes of Can Grande, see *Commedia*, etc., by E. H. Plumptre, D.D., 1886, I. cxx., cxxi.; and compare *Dante at Verona*, by D. G. Rossetti, *Works*, 1886, i. 1-17.]

2. [Ippolito Pindemonte, the modern Tibullus (1753-1828). (See *Letters*, 1900, iv. 127, note 4.)]

3. [Claudian’s famous old man of Verona, “*qui suburbium nunquam egressus est*.”

“Indocilis rerum, vicinæ nescius urbis,  
 Adspectu fruitur liberiore poli.”

C. Claudiani *Opera*, lii., *Epigramma*, ii. lines 9, 10 (ed. 1821, iii. 427).]

4. [“In the amphitheatre . . . crowds collected after the sittings of the Congress, to witness dramatic representations. . . . But for the costumes, a spectator might have imagined he was witnessing a resurrection of the ancient Romans.”—*Congress*, etc., by M. de Chateaubriand, 1838, i. 76. This was on the 24th of November. Catalani sang. Rossini’s cantata was performed with tremendous applause. On the next day the august visitors witnessed an illumination of the city. “Leur attention s’est principalement arrêtée sur le superbe portail de l’église Sainte-Agnès, qui brillait de mille feux, au milieu desquels se lisait l’inscription suivante en lettres de grandeur colossale :

‘A Cesare Augusto Verona esultante.’”

—*Le Moniteur*, December 14, 1822.]

Crowd to the theatre with loyal rage,  
 The comedy is not upon the stage;  
 The show is rich in ribandry and stars, 430  
 Then gaze upon it through thy dungeon bars;  
 Clap thy permitted palms, kind Italy,  
 For thus much still thy fettered hands are free!

## X.

Resplendent sight! Behold the coxcomb Czar,<sup>1</sup>  
 The Autocrat of waltzes<sup>2</sup> and of war!  
 As eager for a plaudit as a realm,  
 And just as fit for flirting as the helm;  
 A Calmuck beauty with a Cossack wit,  
 And generous spirit, when 'tis not frost-bit;  
 Now half dissolving to a liberal thaw,<sup>1</sup> 440

i. *Now half inclining* —.—[MS.]

1. [Alexander I. (Paulowitsch), 1777-1825, succeeded his father in 1801. He began his reign well. Taxation was diminished, judicial penalties were remitted, universities were founded and reorganized, personal servitude was abolished or restricted throughout the empire. At the height of his power and influence, when he was regarded as the Liberator of Europe, he granted a Constitution to Poland, based on liberal if not democratic principles (June 21, 1815). But after a time he reverted to absolutism. Autocracy at home, a mystical and sentimental alliance with autocrats abroad, were incompatible with the indulgence of liberal proclivities. "After the Congresses of Aix-la-Chapelle and Troppau," writes M. Rambaud (*History of Russia*, 1888, ii. 384), "he was no longer the same man. . . . From that time he considered himself the dupe of his generous ideas, . . . at Carlsbad, at Laybach, and at Verona, Alexander was already the leader of the European reaction." But even to the last he believed that he could run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. "They may say of me," he exclaimed, "what they will; but I have lived and shall die republican" (*ibid.*, p. 398).]

Alexander was a man of ideas, a sentimentalist, and a *poseur*, but he had an eye to the main chance. Whatever cause or dynasty suffered, the Emperor Alexander was still triumphant. Byron's special grudge against him at this time was due to his vacillation with regard to the cause of Greek Independence. But he is too contemptuous. There were points in common between the "Coxcomb Czar" and his satirist; and it is far from certain that if the twain had changed places Byron might not have proved just "*such* an Alexander." In one respect their destiny was alike. The greatest sorrow of their lives was the death of a natural daughter.]

2. [For Alexander's waltzing, see *Personal Reminiscences*, by Cornelia Knight and Thomas Raikes, 1875, p. 286. See, too, Moore's *Fables for the Holy Alliance*, Fable I., "A Dream."]

But hardened back whene'er the morning 's raw ;  
 With no objection to true Liberty,  
 Except that it would make the nations free.  
 How well the imperial dandy prates of peace !  
 How fain, if Greeks would be his slaves, free Greece !  
 How nobly gave he back the Poles their Diet,  
 Then told pugnacious Poland to be quiet !  
 How kindly would he send the mild Ukraine,  
 With all her pleasant Pulks,<sup>1</sup> to lecture Spain !  
 How royally show off in proud Madrid 450  
 His goodly person, from the South long hid !  
 A blessing cheaply purchased, the world knows,  
 By having Muscovites for friends or foes.  
 Proceed, thou namesake of great Philip's son !  
 La Harpe, thine Aristotle, beckons on ;<sup>2</sup>  
 And that which Scythia was to him of yore  
 Find with thy Scythians on Iberia's shore.  
 Yet think upon, thou somewhat agéd youth,  
 Thy predecessor on the banks of Pruth ;  
 Thou hast to aid thee, should his lot be thine, 46  
 Many an old woman,<sup>3</sup> but not Catherine.<sup>4</sup>  
 Spain, too, hath rocks, and rivers, and defiles—

1. ["Pulk" is Polish for "regiment." The allusion must be to the military colonies planted by "the corporal of Gatchina," Araktchéef, in the governments of Novgorod, Kharkof, and elsewhere.]

2. [Frédéric César La Harpe (1754-1838) was appointed by Catherine II. Governor to the Grand-Dukes Alexander and Constantine. It was from La Harpe's teaching that Alexander imbibed his liberal ideas. In 1816, when Byron passed the summer in Switzerland, La Harpe was domiciled at Lausanne, and it is possible that a meeting took place.]

3. [Alexander's platonic attachment to the Baronne de Krüdener (Barbe Julie de Wietenhoff), beauty, novelist, *illuminée*, was the source of amusement rather than scandal. The Baronne, then in her fiftieth year, was the channel through which Franz Bader's theory or doctrine of the "Holy Alliance" was conveyed to the enthusiastic and receptive Czar. It was only a passing whim. Alexander's mysticism was for ornament, not for use, and, before very long, Egeria and her Muscovite Numa parted company.]

4. The dexterity of Catherine extricated Peter (called the Great by courtesy), when surrounded by the Mussulmans on the banks of the river Pruth. [Catherine, who had long been Peter's mistress, had at length been acknowledged as his wife. Her "dexterity" took the form of a bribe of money and jewels, conveyed to the Turkish grand-vizier Baltazhi-Mahomet, who was induced to accede to the Treaty of Pruth, July 20, 1711.]

The Bear may rush into the Lion's toils.  
 Fatal to Goths are Xeres' sunny fields;<sup>1</sup>  
 Think'st thou to thee Napoleon's victor yields?  
 Better reclaim thy deserts, turn thy swords  
 To ploughshares, shave and wash thy Bashkir<sup>2</sup> hordes,  
 Redeem thy realms from slavery and the knout,  
 Than follow headlong in the fatal route,  
 To infest the clime whose skies and laws are pure 470  
 With thy foul legions. Spain wants no manure:  
 Her soil is fertile, but she feeds no foe:  
 Her vultures, too, were gorged not long ago;  
 And wouldst thou furnish them with fresher prey?  
 Alas! thou wilt not conquer, but purvey.  
 I am Diogenes, though Russ and Hun<sup>3</sup>  
 Stand between mine and many a myriad's sun;  
 But were I not Diogenes, I'd wander  
 Rather a worm than *such* an Alexander!  
 Be slaves who will, the cynic shall be free; 480  
 His tub hath tougher walls than Sinopé:<sup>4</sup>  
 Still will he hold his lantern up to scan  
 The face of monarchs for an "honest man."<sup>4</sup>

## XI.

And what doth Gaul, the all-prolific land  
 Of *ne plus ultra* ultras and their band  
 Of mercenaries? and her noisy chambers  
 And tribune, which each orator first clammers

i. *Still will I roll my tub at Sinope*  
*Be slaves who may —.—[MS.]*

1. ["Eight thousand men had to Asturias march'd  
 Beneath Count Julian's banner. . . . To revenge  
 His quarrel, twice that number left their bones,  
 Slain in unnatural battle, on the field  
 Of Xeres, where the sceptre from the Goths  
 By righteous Heaven was reft."]

Southey's *Roderick*, Canto XXV. lines 1, 2, 7-11.]

2. [The Bashkirs are a Turco-Mongolian tribe inhabiting the slopes of the Ural Mountains. They supply a body of irregular cavalry to the Russian army.]

3. [The Austrian and Russian armies stood between the Greeks and other peoples, and their independence, as Alexander the Great stood between Diogenes and the sunshine.]

4. [Lines 482, 483, are not in the MS.]



Before he finds a voice, and when 'tis found,  
 Hears "the lie" echo for his answer round?  
 Our British Commons sometimes deign to "hear!" 490  
 A Gallic senate hath more tongue than ear;  
 Even Constant,<sup>1</sup> their sole master of debate,  
 Must fight next day his speech to vindicate.  
 But this costs little to true Franks, who'd rather  
 Combat than listen, were it to their father.  
 What is the simple standing of a shot,  
 To listening long, and interrupting not?  
 Though this was not the method of old Rome,  
 When Tully fulminated o'er each vocal dome,  
 Demosthenes has sanctioned the transaction, 500  
 In saying eloquence meant "Action, action!"

## XII.

But where's the monarch?<sup>2</sup> hath he dined? or yet  
 Groans beneath indigestion's heavy debt?

1. [Constant (Henri Benjamin de Rebecque, 1767-1830) was the "stormy petrel" of debate in the French Chamber. For instance, in a discussion on secret service money for the police (July 27, 1822), he exclaimed, "Vous les représentez-vous payant d'une main le salaire du vol, et tenant peut-être un crucifix de l'autre?" No wonder that there were "violens murmures, cris d'indignation à droite." The duel, however, did not arise out of a speech in the Chamber, but from a letter of June 5, 1822, in *La Quotidienne*, in which the Marquis de Forbin des Issarts replied to some letters of Constant, which had appeared in the *Courrier* and *Constitutionnel*. Constant was lame, and accordingly both combatants "out été placés à dix petits pas sur des chaises." Both fired twice, but neither "was a penny the worse." (See *La Grande Encyclopédie*, art. "Constant;," and, for details, *La Quotidienne*, June 8, 1822. See, too, for "session de 1822," *Opinions et Discours* de M. Casimir Perrier, 1838, ii. 5-47.)]

1. [Louis XVIII. (Louis Stanislas Xavier, 1755-1824) passed several years of exile in England, at Goswell, Wanstead, and latterly at Hartwell, near Aylesbury, in Buckinghamshire. When he entered Paris as king, in May, 1814, he was in his fifty-ninth year, inordinately bulky and unwieldy—a king *pour rire*. "C'est ce gros gouteux," explained an *ouvrier* to a bystander, who had asked, "Which is the king?" Fifteen mutton cutlets, "sautées au jus," for breakfast; fifteen mutton cutlets served with a "sauce à la champagne," for dinner; to say nothing of strawberries, and sweet apple-puffs between meals, made digestion and locomotion difficult. It was no wonder that he was a martyr to the gout. But he cared for nature and for books as well as for eating. His *Lettres d'Artwell* (Paris, 1830), which profess to be selections from his correspondence with a friend, give a pleasant picture of the *roi en exil*. His wife, Louise de Savoie, died November,

Have revolutionary patés risen,  
 And turned the royal entrails to a prison?  
 Have discontented movements stirred the troops?  
 Or have *no* movements followed traitorous soups?  
 Have Carbonaro<sup>1</sup> cooks not carbonadoed  
 Each course enough? or doctors dire dissuaded  
 Repletion? Ah! in thy dejected looks 510  
 I read all France's treason in her cooks!  
 Good classic Louis! is it, canst thou say,  
 Desirable to be the "Desiré?"  
 Why wouldst thou leave calm Hartwell's green abode,  
 Apician table, and Horatian ode,  
 To rule a people who will not be ruled,  
 And love much rather to be scourged than schooled?  
 Ah! thine was not the temper or the taste  
 For thrones; the table sees thee better placed:  
 A mild Epicurean, formed, at best, 520  
 To be a kind host and as good a guest,  
 To talk of Letters, and to know by heart  
 One *half* the Poet's, *all* the Gourmand's art;  
 A scholar always, now and then a wit,  
 And gentle when Digestion may permit;—

1810, and in the following April he writes (*Lettres*, pp. 70, 71), "Mars a maintenu le bien d'un hiver fort doux; point encore de goutte; à *brebis tondue*, *Dieu mesure le vent*. Hélas! je l'éprouve bien qu'elle est tondue cette pauvre brebis! . . . je me promène dans le jardin, je vois mes rosiers qui poussent bien; à qui offrirai-je les roses? . . . Eh bien! je ne voudrais pas que cette goutte d'absinthe cessât, car pour cela il faudrait l'oublier. L'oublier! Ah Dieu! Je suis comme les enfans d'Israël qui disaient: *Super flumina Babylonis* . . . *Sion!* Mais ajoutons tout de suite: *Si oblitus fuero tui, Jerusalem, oblivioni detur dextera mea*." In another letter, June 8, 1811, he criticizes some translations of Horace, and laments that the good Père Sanadon has confined himself to the *Opera Expurgata*. Not, he adds, that he would not have excluded one or two odes, "mais on a impitoyablement sabré des choses délicieuses" (*Lettres*, p. 98).

To his wit, Chateaubriand testifies (*The Congress, etc.*, 1838, i. 262). At the council, when affairs of state were being discussed, the king "would say in his clear shrill voice, 'I am going to make you laugh, M. de Chateaubriand.' The other ministers fumed with impatience, but Chateaubriand laughed, not as a courtier, but as a human being."

1. [Louvel, who assassinated the Duc de Berri, and who was executed June 7, 1820, was supposed to have been an agent of the *carbonari*. La Fayette, Constant, Lafitte, and others were also suspected of being connected with secret societies.—*The Court of the Tuileries*, 1815-1848, by Lady Jackson, 1883, ii. 19.]

But not to govern lands enslaved or free ;  
The gout was martyrdom enough for thee.

## XIII.

Shall noble Albion pass without a phrase  
From a bold Briton in her wonted praise ?  
" Arts—arms—and George—and glory—and the Isles,  
And happy Britain, wealth, and Freedom's smiles, 531  
White cliffs, that held invasion far aloof,  
Contented subjects, all alike tax-proof,  
Proud Wellington, with eagle beak so curled,<sup>1</sup>  
That nose, the hook where he suspends the world !<sup>1</sup>  
And Waterloo, and trade, and——(hush ! not yet  
A syllable of imposts or of debt)——  
And ne'er (enough) lamented Castlereagh,<sup>2</sup>  
Whose penknife slit a goose-quill t'other day——<sup>11</sup>  
And, ' pilots who have weathered every storm '——<sup>3</sup> 540  
(But, no, not even for rhyme's sake, name Reform)."  
These are the themes thus sung so oft before,  
Methinks we need not sing them any more ;  
Found in so many volumes far and near,

- i. *Immortal Wellington with beak so curled.  
That foremost Corporal of all the World—  
Immortal Wellington—and flags unfurled.*—[MS. erased.]
- ii. *Whose penknife saved some nation's t'other day.  
Who shaved his throat by chance the other day.*—[MS. erased.]

1. "Naso suspendis adunco."—HORACE [*Sat.* i. 6, 5].  
The Roman applies it to one who merely was imperious to his acquaintance.

2. [Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh, afterwards Marquis of Londonderry (1769-1822), who had been labouring under a "mental delirium" (Letter of Duke of Wellington, August 9, 1822), committed suicide by cutting his throat with a penknife (August 12, 1822). He was the uncompromising and successful opponent of popular causes in Ireland, Italy, and elsewhere, and, as such, Byron assailed him, alive and dead, with the bitterest invective. (See, for instance, the "Dedication" to *Don Juan*, stanzas xi.-xvi., sundry epigrams, and an "Epitaph.") In the Preface to Cantos VI., VII., VIII., of *Don Juan*, he justifies the inclusion of a stanza or two on Castlereagh, which had been written "before his decease," and, again, alludes to his suicide. (For an estimate of his career and character, see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 108, 109, note 1; and for a full report of the inquest, *The Annual Biography*, 1823, pp. 56-62.)]

3. ["The Pilot that weathered the Storm" was written by Canning, to be recited at a dinner given on Pitt's birthday, May 28, 1802.]

There's no occasion you should find them here.  
 Yet something may remain perchance to chime  
 With reason, and, what's stranger still, with rhyme.<sup>i</sup>  
 Even this thy genius, Canning !<sup>1</sup> may permit,  
 Who, bred a statesman, still wast born a wit,  
 And never, even in that dull House, couldst tame 550  
 To unleavened prose thine own poetic flame ;  
 Our last, our best, our only orator,  
 Even I can praise thee—Tories do no more :  
 Nay, not so much ;—they hate thee, man, because  
 Thy Spirit less upholds them than it awes.  
 The hounds will gather to their huntsman's hollo,  
 And where he leads the duteous pack will follow ;  
 But not for love mistake their yelling cry ;  
 Their yelp for game is not an eulogy ;  
 Less faithful far than the four-footed pack, 560  
 A dubious scent would lure the bipeds back.  
 Thy saddle-girths are not yet quite secure,  
 Nor royal stallion's feet extremely sure ;  
 The unwieldy old white horse is apt at last  
 To stumble, kick—and now and then stick fast  
 With his great Self and Rider in the mud ;  
 But what of that ? the animal shows blood.

## XIV.

Alas, the Country ! how shall tongue or pen  
 Bewail her now *uncountry* gentlemen ?  
 The last to bid the cry of warfare cease, 570  
 The first to make a malady of peace.

i. *With reason—what'er it may with rhyme.*—[MS. erased.]

x. [George Canning (1770-1827) succeeded Lord Londonderry as Foreign Secretary, September 8, 1822. He was not a *persona grata* to George IV., who had been offended by Canning's neutral attitude, as a minister, on the question of the Queen's message (June 7, 1820), and by his avowal "of an unaltered regard and affection" for that "illustrious personage" herself. There was, too, the prospect of Catholic Emancipation. In 1821 he had spoken in favour of Plunket's bills, and, the next year (April 30, 1822), he had brought in a bill to remove the disabilities of Roman Catholic peers from sitting in the House of Lords. If Canning persisted in his advocacy of Catholic claims, the king's conscience might turn restive, and urge him to effectual resistance. Hence the warning in lines 563-567.]

For what were all these country patriots born ?  
 To hunt—and vote—and raise the price of corn ?  
 But corn, like every mortal thing, must fall,  
 Kings—Conquerors—and markets most of all.  
 And must ye fall with every ear of grain ?  
 Why would you trouble Buonaparté's reign ?  
 He was your great Triptolemus ;<sup>1</sup> his vices  
 Destroyed but realms, and still maintained your prices ;  
 He amplified to every lord's content 580  
 The grand agrarian alchymy, high *rent*.<sup>4</sup>  
 Why did the tyrant stumble on the Tartars,  
 And lower wheat to such desponding quarters ?  
 Why did you chain him on yon Isle so lone ?  
 The man was worth much more upon his throne.  
 True, blood and treasure boundlessly were spilt,  
 But what of that ? the Gaul may bear the guilt ;  
 But bread was high, the farmer paid his way,  
 And acres told upon the appointed day.<sup>4</sup>  
 But where is now the goodly audit ale ? 590  
 The purse-proud tenant, never known to fail ?  
 The farm which never yet was left on hand ?  
 The marsh reclaimed to most improving land ?  
 The impatient hope of the expiring lease ?  
 The doubling rental ? What an evil 's peace !  
 In vain the prize excites the ploughman's skill,  
 In vain the Commons pass their patriot bill ;<sup>2</sup>  
 The *Landed Interest*—(you may understand  
 The phrase much better leaving out the *land*)—  
 The land self-interest groans from shore to shore, 600

i. *The mighty monosyllable high Rent* !—[MS.]

ii. — *upon the audit day*.—[MS. M.]

1. [Demeter gave Triptolemus a chariot drawn by serpents, and bade him scatter wheat throughout the world. (See Ovid, *Met.*, lib. v. lines 642-661.)]

2. ["Lord Londonderry proposed (April 29, 1822) that whenever wheat should be under 60 shillings a quarter, Government should be authorized to issue £1,000,000 in Exchequer bills to landed proprietors on the security of their crops ; that importation of foreign corn should be permitted whenever the price of wheat should be at or above 70 shillings a quarter . . . that a sliding-scale should be fixed, that for wheat being under 80s. a quarter at 12 shillings ; above 80s. and below 85s., at 5 shillings ; and above 85s., only one shilling."—Alison's *History of Europe*, 1815-1852, and 1854, ii. 506. The first clause was thrown out, but the rest of the bill passed May 13, 1822.]

For fear that plenty should attain the poor.<sup>i</sup>  
 Up, up again, ye rents, exalt your notes,  
 Or else the Ministry will lose their votes,  
 And patriotism, so delicately nice,  
 Her loaves will lower to the market price;<sup>ii</sup>  
 For ah! "the loaves and fishes," once so high,  
 Are gone—their oven closed, their ocean dry,<sup>iii</sup>  
 And nought remains of all the millions spent,  
 Excepting to grow moderate and content.  
 They who are not so, *had* their turn—and turn 610  
 About still flows from Fortune's equal urn;  
 Now let their virtue be its own reward,  
 And share the blessings which themselves prepared.  
 See these inglorious Cincinnati swarm,  
 Farmers of war, dictators of the farm;  
*Their* ploughshare was the sword in hiring hands,  
*Their* fields manured by gore of other lands;  
 Safe in their barns, these Sabine tillers sent  
 Their brethren out to battle—why? for rent!  
 Year after year they voted cent. per cent. 620  
 Blood, sweat, and tear-wrung millions—why?—for rent!  
 They roared, they dined, they drank, they swore they  
 meant  
 To die for England—why then live?—for rent!  
 The peace has made one general malcontent  
 Of these high-market patriots; war was rent!  
 Their love of country, millions all mis-spent,  
 How reconcile? by reconciling rent!  
 And will they not repay the treasures lent?  
 No: down with everything, and up with rent!  
 Their good, ill, health, wealth, joy, or discontent, 630  
 Being, end, aim, religion—*rent—rent—rent!*  
 Thou sold'st thy birthright, Esau! for a mess;  
 Thou shouldst have gotten more, or eaten less;  
 Now thou hast swilled thy pottage, thy demands  
 Are idle; Israel says the bargain stands.  
 Such, landlords! was your appetite for war,

i. *For fear that riches* —.—[MS. M.]

ii. *Will sell the harvest at a market price.*—[MS. M.]

iii. *Are gone—their fields untilled.*—[MS. M.]

And gorged with blood, you grumble at a scar !  
 What ! would they spread their earthquake even o'er cash ?  
 And when land crumbles, bid firm paper crash ?<sup>1</sup>  
 So rent may rise, bid Bank and Nation fall, 640  
 And found on 'Change a *Fundling* Hospital ?  
 Lo, Mother Church, while all religion writhes,  
 Like Niobe, weeps o'er her offspring—Tithes ;<sup>2</sup>  
 The Prelates go to—where the Saints have gone,  
 And proud pluralities subside to one ;  
 Church, state, and faction wrestle in the dark,  
 Tossed by the deluge in their common ark.  
 Shorn of her bishops, banks, and dividends,  
 Another Babel soars—but Britain ends.  
 And why ? to pamper the self-seeking wants, 650  
 And prop the hill of these agrarian ants.  
 "Go to these ants, thou sluggard, and be wise ;"  
 Admire their patience through each sacrifice,  
 Till taught to feel the lesson of their pride,  
 The price of taxes and of homicide ;  
 Admire their justice, which would fain deny  
 The debt of nations :—pray *who made it high* ?<sup>3</sup>

1. [Peel's bill for the resumption of cash payments (Act 59 Geo. III. cap. 49) was passed June 14, 1819. The "landed interest" attributed the fall of prices and the consequent fall of rent to this measure, and hinted more or less plainly that the fund-holders should share the loss. They had lent their money when the currency was inflated, and should not now be paid off in gold.

"But *you*," exclaims Cobbett [Letter to Mr. Western (*Weekly Register*, November 23, 1822)], "what can induce you to stickle for the Pitt system [*i.e.* paper-money] ? I will tell you what it is: you loved the *high prices*, and the domination that they gave you. . . . Besides this, you think that the *boroughs can be preserved* by a return to paper-money, and along with them the hare-and-pheasant law and justice. You loved the glorious times of paper-money, and you want them back again. You think that they could go on for ever. . . . The bill of 1819 was really a great relaxation of the Pitt system, and when you are crying out *spoliation* and *confiscation*, when you are bawling out so lustily about the robbery committed on you by the fund-holders and the placemen, and are praising the infernal Pitt system at the same time, . . . you say they are receiving, the fund-vagabonds in particular, *more* than they ought." It is evident that Byron's verse is a reverberation of Cobbett's prose.]

2. [Petitions were presented by the inhabitants of St. Andrew, Holborn ; St. Botolph, Bishopsgate ; and St. Gregory by St. Paul, to the Court of Common Council, against a tithe-charge of 2s. 9d. in the pound on their annual rents.—*Morning Chronicle*, November 1, 1822.]

3. [Lines 614-657 are not in the MS.]

## XV.

Or turn to sail between those shifting rocks,  
 The new Symplegades <sup>1</sup>—the crushing Stocks,  
 Where Midas might again his wish behold 660  
 In real paper or imagined gold.  
 That magic palace of Alcina <sup>2</sup> shows  
 More wealth than Britain ever had to lose,  
 Were all her atoms of unleavened ore,  
 And all her pebbles from Pactolus' shore.  
 There Fortune plays, while Rumour holds the stake  
 And the World trembles to bid brokers break.  
 How rich is Britain ! not indeed in mines,  
 Or peace or plenty, corn or oil, or wines ;  
 No land of Canaan, full of milk and honey, 670  
 Nor (save in paper shekels) ready money :  
 But let us not to own the truth refuse,  
 Was ever Christian land so rich in Jews ?  
 Those parted with their teeth to good King John,  
 And now, ye kings, they kindly draw your own ;  
 All states, all things, all sovereigns they control,  
 And waft a loan "from Indus to the pole."  
 The banker—broker—baron <sup>3</sup>—brethren, speed

1. [The Symplegades, or "justling rocks," Ovid's *instabiles Cyaneæ*, were supposed to crush the ships which sailed between them.]

2. [Alcina, the personification of carnal pleasure in the *Orlando Furioso*, is the counterpart of Homer's *Circe*. "She enjoyed her lovers for a time, and then changed them into trees, stones, fountains, or beasts, as her fancy dictated." (See Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, vi. 35, *seq.*)]

3. [There were five brothers Rothschild: Anselm, of Frankfort, 1773-1855; Salomon, of Vienna, 1774-1855; Nathan Mayer, of London, 1777-1836; Charles, of Naples, 1788-1855; and James, of Paris, 1792-1868. In 1821 Austria raised 37½ million gulden through the firm, and, as an acknowledgment of their services, the Emperor raised the brothers to the rank of baron, and appointed Baron Nathan Mayer Consul-General in London, and Baron James to the same post in Paris. In 1822 both Russia (see line 684) and England raised 3½ millions sterling through the Rothschilds. The "two Jews" (line 686, etc.) are, probably, the two Consuls-General. In 1822 their honours were new, and some mocked. There is the story that Talleyrand once presented the Parisian brother to Montmorency as *M. le premier Baron Juif* to *M. le premier Baron Chrétien*; while another tale, parent or off-spring of the preceding, which appeared in *La Quotidienne*, December 21, 1822, testifies to the fact, not recorded, that a Rothschild was at Verona during the Congress: "M. de Rotschild, baron et banquier



To aid these bankrupt tyrants in their need.  
 Nor these alone ; Columbia feels no less 680  
 Fresh speculations follow each success ;  
 And philanthropic Israel deigns to drain  
 Her mild per-centage from exhausted Spain.  
 Not without Abraham's seed can Russia march ;  
 'Tis gold, not steel, that rears the conqueror's arch.  
 Two Jews, a chosen people, can command  
 In every realm their Scripture-promised land :—  
 Two Jews, keep down the Romans,<sup>1</sup> and uphold  
 The accurséd Hun, more brutal than of old :  
 Two Jews,—but not Samaritans—direct 690  
 The world, with all the spirit of their sect.  
 What is the happiness of earth to them ?  
 A congress forms their " New Jerusalem,"  
 Where baronies and orders both invite—  
 Oh, holy Abraham ! dost thou see the sight ?  
 Thy followers mingling with these royal swine,  
 Who spit not " on their Jewish gaberdine,"  
 But honour them as portion of the show—  
 (Where now, oh Pope ! is thy forsaken toe ?  
 Could it not favour Judah with some kicks ? 700  
 Or has it ceased to " kick against the pricks ? ")  
 On Shylock's shore behold them stand afresh,  
 To cut from Nation's hearts their " pound of flesh."

## XVI.

Strange sight this Congress ! destined to unite  
 All that 's incongruous, all that 's opposite.  
 I speak not of the Sovereigns—they're alike,  
 A common coin as ever mint could strike ;  
 But those who sway the puppets, pull the strings,  
 Have more of motley than their heavy kings.

général des gouvernemens absolus, s'est, dit-on, rendu au congrès, il a été présenté à l'empereur d'Autriche, et S.M., en lui remettant une décoration, a daigné lui dire : ' Vous pouvez être assuré, Monsieur, que *la maison d'Autriche* sera toujours disposée à reconnaître vos services et à vous accorder ce qui pourra vous être agréable, '—' Votre Majesté,' a répondu le baron financier, ' pourra toujours également compter sur *la maison Rothschild*.' "—See *The Rothschilds*, by John Reeves, 1886.]

1. [In 1822 the Neapolitan Government raised 22,000,000 ducats through the Rothschilds.]

Jews, authors, generals, charlatans, combine, 710  
 While Europe wonders at the vast design :  
 There Metternich, power's foremost parasite,  
 Cajoles ; there Wellington forgets to fight ;  
 There Chateaubriand <sup>1</sup> forms new books of martyrs ;  
 And subtle Greeks <sup>2</sup> intrigue for stupid Tartars ;  
 There Montmorenci, the sworn foe to charters,<sup>3</sup>  
 Turns a diplomatist of great éclat,  
 To furnish articles for the "Débats ;"  
 Of war so certain—yet not quite so sure  
 As his dismissal in the "Moniteur." 720  
 Alas ! how could his cabinet thus err !  
 Can Peace be worth an ultra-minister ?

1. Monsieur Chateaubriand, who has not forgotten the author in the minister, received a handsome compliment at Verona from a literary sovereign : "Ah ! Monsieur C., are you related to that Chateaubriand who—who—who has written *something* ?" (*écrit quelque chose !*) It is said that the author of *Atala* repented him for a moment of his legitimacy. [François René Vicomte de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) published *Les Martyrs ou le Triomphe de la religion chrétienne* in 1809.]

2. [Count Capo d'Istria (b. 1776)—afterwards President of Greece. The count was murdered, in September, 1831, by the brother and son of a Mainote chief whom he had imprisoned (*note* to ed. 1832). Byron may have believed that Capo d'Istria was still in the service of the Czar, but, according to Alison, his advocacy of his compatriots the Greeks had led to his withdrawal from the Russian Foreign Office, and prevented his taking part in the Congress. It was, however, stated in the papers that he had been summoned, and was on his way to Verona.]

3. [Jean Mathieu Félicité, Duc de Montmorenci (1766-1826), was, in his youth, a Jacobin. He proposed, August 4, 1789, to abrogate feudal rights, and June 15, 1790, to abolish the nobility. He was superseded as plenipotentiary by Chateaubriand, and on his return to Paris created a duke. Before the end of the year he was called upon to resign his portfolio as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The king disliked him, and there were personal disagreements between him and the Prime Minister, M. de Villèle.]

The following "gazette" appeared in the *Moniteur* :—

"Ordonnance du Roi. Signé Louis. Art 1<sup>er</sup> Le Vicomte de Chateaubriand, pair de France, est nommé ministre secrétaire d'état au département des affaires étrangères. Louis par la grace de Dieu Roi de France et de Navarre.

"Art. 1<sup>er</sup>. Le Duc Mathieu de Montmorenci, pair de France, est nommé ministre d'Etat, et membre de notre Conseil privé.

"Dimanche, 29 Décembre, 1822."

"On Tuesday, January 1, 1823," writes Chateaubriand, *Congress*, 1838, i. 258, "we crossed the bridges, and went to sleep in that minister's bed, which was not made for us,—a bed in which one sleeps but little, and in which one remains only for a short time."]

He falls indeed, perhaps to rise again,  
 "Almost as quickly as he conquered Spain."<sup>1</sup>

## XVII.

Enough of this—a sight more mournful woos  
 The averted eye of the reluctant Muse.  
 The Imperial daughter, the Imperial bride,<sup>2</sup>  
 The imperial Victim—sacrifice to pride;  
 The mother of the Hero's hope, the boy,  
 The young Astyanax of Modern Troy;<sup>3</sup> 730  
 The still pale shadow of the loftiest Queen  
 That Earth has yet to see, or e'er hath seen;  
 She flits amidst the phantoms of the hour,  
 The theme of pity, and the wreck of power.  
 Oh, cruel mockery! Could not Austria spare  
 A daughter? What did France's widow there?  
 Her fitter place was by St. Helen's wave,  
 Her only throne is in Napoleon's grave.  
 But, no,—she still must hold a petty reign,  
 Flanked by her formidable chamberlain; 740  
 The martial Argus, whose not hundred eyes<sup>4</sup>  
 Must watch her through these paltry pageantries.

1. [From Pope's line on Lord Peterborough, *Imitations of Horace*, Sat. i. 132.]

2. [Marie Louise, daughter of Francis I. of Austria, was born December 12, 1791, and died December 18, 1849. She was married to Napoleon, April 2, 1810, and gave birth to a son, March 29, 1811. In accordance with the Treaty of Paris, she left France April 26, 1814, renounced the title of Empress, and was created Duchess of Parma, Placentia, and Guastalla. After Napoleon's death (May 5, 1821). "Proud Austria's mournful flower" did not long remain a widow, but speedily and secretly married her chamberlain and gentleman of honour, Count Adam de Neipperg (*ce polisson* Neipperg, as Napoleon called him), to whom she had long been attached. It was supposed that she attended the Congress of Verona in the interest of her son, the ex-King of Rome, to whom Napoleon had bequeathed money and heirlooms. She was a solemn stately personage, *tant soit peu déclassée*, and the other potentates whispered and joked at her expense. Chateaubriand says that when the Duke of Wellington was bored with the meetings of the Congress, he would while away the time in the company of the Orsini, who scribbled on the margin of intercepted French despatches, "Pas pour Mariée." Not for Madame de Neipperg.]

3. [Napoleon François Charles Joseph, Duke of Reichstadt, died at the palace of Schonbrunn, July 22, 1832, having just attained his twenty-first year.]

4. [Count Adam Albrecht de Neipperg had lost an eye from a wound in battle.]

What though she share no more, and shared in vain,  
 A sway surpassing that of Charlemagne,  
 Which swept from Moscow to the southern seas !  
 Yet still she rules the pastoral realm of cheese,  
 Where Parma views the traveller resort,  
 To note the trappings of her mimic court.  
 But she appears ! Verona sees her shorn  
 Of all her beams—while nations gaze and mourn— 750  
 Ere yet her husband's ashes have had time  
 To chill in their inhospitable clime ;  
 (If e'er those awful ashes can grow cold ;—  
 But no,—their embers soon will burst the mould ;)  
 She comes !—the Andromache (but not Racine's,  
 Nor Homer's,)—Lo ! on Pyrrhus' arm <sup>1</sup> she leans !<sup>1</sup>  
 Yes ! the right arm, yet red from Waterloo,  
 Which cut her lord's half-shattered sceptre through,  
 Is offered and accepted ? Could a slave  
 Do more ? or less ?—and *he* in his new grave ! 760  
 Her eye—her cheek—betray no inward strife,  
 And the *Ex*-Empress grows as *Ex* a wife !  
 So much for human ties in royal breasts !  
 Why spare men's feelings, when their own are jests ?

## XVIII.

But, tired of foreign follies, I turn home,  
 And sketch the group—the picture's yet to come.

i. *She comes the Andromache of Europe's Queens,  
 And led by Pyrrhus' arm on which she leans.*—[MS. M.]

1. [*La Quotidienne* of December 4, 1822, has a satirical reference to a passage in the *Courrier*, which attached a diplomatic importance to the "galanterie respectueuse que le duc de Wellington aurait faite à cette jeune Princesse." We read, too, of another victorious foe, the King of Prussia, giving "la main à l'archduchesse Marie-Louise jusqu'à son carrosse" (*Le Constitutionnel*, November 19, 1822). "All the world wondered" what Andromache did, and how she would fare—*dans cette galère*. It is difficult to explain the allusion to Pyrrhus. Andromache was the unwilling bride of Pyrrhus or Neoptolemus, whose father had slain her husband, Hector ; Marie Louise the willing bride of Neipperg, who had certainly fought at Leipsic, but who could not be said to have given the final blow to Napoleon at Waterloo. Pyrrhus must stand for the victorious foe, and the right arm on which the too-forgiving Andromache leant, must have been offered by "the respectful gallantry" of the Duke of Wellington.]

My Muse 'gan weep, but, ere a tear was spilt,  
 She caught Sir William Curtis in a kilt !<sup>1</sup>  
 While thronged the chiefs of every Highland clan  
 To hail their brother, Vich Ian Alderman ! 770  
 Guildhall grows Gael, and echoes with Erse roar,  
 While all the Common Council cry "Claymore !" <sup>2</sup>  
 To see proud Albyn's tartans as a belt  
 Gird the gross sirloin of a city Celt,  
 She burst into a laughter so extreme,  
 That I awoke—and lo ! it was *no* dream !

Here, reader, will we pause :—if there's no harm in  
 This first—you'll have, perhaps, a second "Carmen."

B. J<sup>n</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> 1823.

1. [Sir William Curtis (1752-1825), maker of sea biscuits at Wapping, was M.P. for the City of London 1790-1818, Lord Mayor 1795-6. George IV. affected his society, visited him at Ramsgate, and sailed with him in his gorgeously appointed yacht. When the king visited Scotland in August, 1822, Curtis followed in his train. On first landing at Leith, "Sir William Curtis, who had *celtified* himself on the occasion, marched joyously in his scanty longitude of kilt." At the Levee, August 17, "Sir William Curtis again appeared in the Royal tartan, but he had forsaken the philabeg and addicted himself to the trews" (*Morning Chronicle*, August 19, 20, 1822). "The Fat Knight" was seventy years of age, and there was much joking at his expense. See, for instance, some lines in "Hudibrastic measure," *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 92, Part II. p. 606—

"And who is he, that sleek and smart one  
 Pot-bellied pyramid of Tartan ?

So mountainous in pingitude,  
*Ponderibus librata* Suis,  
 He stands like *pig* of lead, so true is,  
 That his abdomen throws alone  
 A *Body-guard* around the Throne !"

2. [Lines 771, 772 are not in the MS.]

T

THE ISLAND;  
OR,  
CHRISTIAN AND HIS COMRADES.

T



## INTRODUCTION TO *THE ISLAND*.

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THE first canto of *The Island* was finished January 10, 1823. We know that Byron was still at work on "the poeshie," January 25 (*Letters*, 1901, vi. 164), and may reasonably conjecture that a somewhat illegible date affixed to the fourth canto, stands for February 14, 1823. The MS. had been received in London before April 9 (*ibid.*, p. 192); and on June 26, 1823, *The Island; or, The Adventures of Christian and his Comrades*, was published by John Hunt.

Byron's "Advertisement," or note, prefixed to *The Island* contains all that need be said with regard to the "sources" of the poem.

Two separate works were consulted: (1) *A Narrative of the Mutiny on board His Majesty's Ship Bounty, and the subsequent Voyage of . . . the Ship's Boat from Tofoa, one of the Friendly Islands, to Timor, a Dutch Settlement in the East Indies*, written by Lieutenant William Bligh, 1790; and (2) *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands*, Compiled and Arranged from the Extensive Communications of Mr. William Mariner, by John Martin, M.D., 1817.

According to George Clinton (*Life and Writings of Lord Byron*, 1824, p. 656), Byron was profoundly impressed by Mariner's report of the scenery and folklore of the *Friendly Islands*, was "never tired of talking of it to his friends," and, in order to turn this poetic material to account, finally bethought him that Bligh's *Narrative* of the mutiny of the *Bounty* would serve as a framework or structure "for an embroidery of rare device"—the figures and foliage of a tropical pattern. That, at least, is the substance of Clinton's analysis of the "sources" of *The Island*, and whether he spoke, or only feigned to speak, with authority, his criticism is sound and to the point. The story of the mutiny of the *Bounty*, which is faithfully related in the first canto, is not, as the second title implies, a prelude to the "Adventures of Christian and his Comrades," but to a description of "The Island," an Ogygia of the South Seas.

It must be borne in mind that Byron's acquaintance with



the details of the mutiny of the *Bounty* was derived exclusively from Bligh's *Narrative*; that he does not seem to have studied the minutes of the court-martial on Peter Heyward and the other prisoners (September, 1792), or to have possessed the information that in 1809, and, again, in 1815, the Admiralty received authentic information with regard to the final settlement of Christian and his comrades on Pitcairn Island. Articles, however, had appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, February, 1810, vol. iii. pp. 23, 24, and July, 1815, vol. xiii. pp. 376-378, which contained an extract from the log-book of Captain Mayhew Folger, of the American ship *Topaz*, dated September 29, 1808, and letters from Folger (March 1, 1813, and Sir Thomas Staines, October 18, 1814, which solved the mystery. Moreover, the article of February, 1810, is quoted in the notes (pp. 313-318) affixed to Miss Mitford's *Christina, the Maid of the South Seas*, 1811, a poem founded on Bligh's *Narrative*, of which neither Byron nor his reviewers seem to have heard.

But whatever may have been his opportunities of ascertaining the facts of the case, it is certain (see his note to Canto IV. section vi. line 122) that he did not know what became of Christian, and that whereas in the first canto he follows the text of Bligh's *Narrative*, in the three last cantos he draws upon his imagination, turning Tahiti into Toobonai (Tubuai), and transporting Toobonai from one archipelago to another—from the Society to the Friendly Islands.

Another and still more surprising feature of *The Island* is that Byron accepts, without qualification or reserve, the guilt of the mutineers and the innocence and worth of Lieutenant Bligh. It is true that by inheritance he was imbued with the traditions of the service, and from personal experience understood the necessity of discipline on board ship; but it may be taken for granted that if he had known that the sympathy, if not the esteem, of the public had been transferred from Bligh to Christian, that in the opinion of grave and competent writers, the guilt of mutiny on the high seas had been almost condoned by the violence and brutality of the commanding officer, he would have sided with the oppressed rather than the oppressor. As it is, he takes Bligh at his own valuation, and carefully abstains from "eulogizing mutiny." (Letter to L. Hunt, January 25, 1823.)

The story of the "mutiny of the *Bounty*" happened in this wise. In 1787 it occurred to certain West India planters and merchants, resident in London, that it would benefit the natives, and perhaps themselves, if the bread-fruit tree, which flourished in Tahiti (the Otaheite of Captain Cook and Sir Joseph Banks, see *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 7, note 2) and

other islands of the South Seas, could be acclimatized in the West Indies. A petition was addressed to the king, with the result that a vessel, with a burden of 215 tons, which Banks christened the *Bounty*, sailed from Spithead December 23, 1787. Lieutenant William Bligh, who had sailed with Cook in the *Resolution*, acted as commanding officer, and under him were five midshipmen, a master, two master's mates, etc.—forty-four persons all told. The *Bounty* arrived at Tahiti October 26, 1788, and there for six delightful months the ship's company tarried, "fleeting the time carelessly, as in the elder world." But "Scripture saith an ending to all fine things must be," and on April 4, 1789, the *Bounty*, with a cargo of over a thousand bread-fruit trees, planted in pots, tubs, and boxes (see for plate of the pots, etc., *A Voyage, etc.*, 1792, p. 1), sailed away westward for the Cape of Good Hope, and the West Indies. All went well at first, but "just before sun-rising" on Tuesday, April 28, 1789, "the north-westernmost of the Friendly Islands, called Tofoa, bearing north-east," Fletcher Christian, who was mate of the watch, assisted by Charles Churchill, master-at-arms, Alexander Smith (the John Adams of Pitcairn Island), and Thomas Burkitt, able seamen, seized the captain, tied his hands behind his back, hauled him out of his berth, and forced him on deck. The boatswain, William Cole, was ordered to hoist out the ship's launch, which measured twenty-three feet from stem to stern, and into this open boat Bligh, together with eighteen of the crew, who were or were supposed to be on his side, were thrust, on pain of instant death. When they were in the boat they were "veered round with a rope, and finally cast adrift." Bligh and his eighteen innocent companions sailed westward, and, after a voyage of "twelve hundred leagues," during which they were preserved from death and destruction by the wise ordering and patient heroism of the commander, safely anchored in Koepang Bay, on the north-west coast of the Isle of Timor, June 14, 1789. (See Bligh's *Narrative, etc.*, 1790, pp. 11-88; and *The Island*, Canto I. section ix. lines 169-201.)

The *Bounty*, with the remainder of the crew, twenty-five in number, "the most able of the ship's company," sailed eastward, first to Toobooai, or Tubuai, an island to the south of the Society Islands, thence to Tahiti (June 6), back to Tubuai (June 26), and yet again, to Tahiti (September 20), where sixteen of the mutineers, including the midshipman George Stewart (the "Torquil" of *The Island*), were put on shore. Finally, September 21, 1789, Fletcher Christian, with the *Bounty* and eight of her crew, six Tahitian men, and twelve women, sailed away still further east to unknown

shores, and, so it was believed, disappeared for good and all. Long afterwards it was known that they had landed on Pitcairn Island, broken up the *Bounty*, and founded a permanent settlement.

When Bligh returned to England (March 14, 1790), and acquainted the Government "with the atrocious act of piracy and mutiny" which had been committed on the high seas, the *Pandora* frigate, with Captain Edwards, was despatched to apprehend the mutineers, and bring them back to England for trial and punishment. The *Pandora* reached Tahiti March 23, 1791, set sail, with fourteen prisoners, May 8, and was wrecked on the "Great Barrier Reef" north-east of Queensland, August 29, 1791. Four of the prisoners, including George Stewart, who had been manacled, and were confined in "Pandora's box," perished in the wreck, and the remaining ten were brought back to England, and tried by court-martial. (See *The Eventful History of the Mutiny*, etc. (by Sir John Barrow), 1831, pp. 205-244.)

The story, which runs through the second, third, and fourth cantos, may possibly owe some of its details to a vague recollection of incidents which happened, or were supposed to happen, at Tahiti, in the interval between the final departure of the *Bounty*, September 21, 1789, and the arrival of the *Pandora*, March 23, 1791; but, as a whole, it is a work of fiction.

With the exception of the fifteenth and sixteenth cantos of *Don Juan*, *The Island* was the last poem of any importance which Byron lived to write, and the question naturally suggests itself—Is the new song as good as the old? Byron answers the question himself. He tells Leigh Hunt (January 25, 1823) that he hopes the "poem will be a little above the ordinary run of periodical poesy," and that, though portions of the Toobonai (*sic*) islanders are "pamby," he intends "to scatter some uncommon places here and there nevertheless." On the whole, in point of conception and execution, *The Island* is weaker and less coherent than the *Corsair*; but it contains lines and passages (e.g. Canto I. lines 107-124, 133-140; Canto II. lines 272-297; Canto IV. lines 94-188) which display a finer feeling and a more "exalted wit" than the "purple patches" of *The Turkish Tales*.

The poetic faculty is somewhat exhausted, but the poetic vision has been purged and heightened by suffering and self-knowledge.

*The Island* was reviewed in the *Monthly Review*, July, 1823, E.S., vol. 101, pp. 316-319; the *New Monthly Magazine*, N.S., 1823, vol. 8, pp. 136-141; the *Atlantic Magazine*, April, 1826, vol. 2, pp. 333-337; in the *Literary Chronicle*, June 21, 1823; and the *Literary Gazette*, June 21, 1823.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE foundation of the following story will be found partly in Lieutenant Bligh's "Narrative of the Mutiny and Seizure of the Bounty, in the South Seas (in 1789) ;" and partly in "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands."

GENOA, 1823.



# THE ISLAND.

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## CANTO THE FIRST.

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### I.

THE morning watch was come; the vessel lay  
Her course, and gently made her liquid way;<sup>i</sup>  
The cloven billow flashed from off her prow  
In furrows formed by that majestic plough;  
The waters with their world were all before;  
Behind, the South Sea's many an islet shore.  
The quiet night, now dappling, 'gan to wane,  
Dividing darkness from the dawning main;  
The dolphins, not unconscious of the day,  
Swam high, as eager of the coming ray;  
The stars from broader beams began to creep,  
And lift their shining eyelids from the deep;<sup>ii</sup>  
The sail resumed its lately shadowed white,  
And the wind fluttered with a freshening flight;  
The purpling Ocean owns the coming Sun,  
But ere he break—a deed is to be done.

10

### II.

The gallant Chief<sup>1</sup> within his cabin slept,  
Secure in those by whom the watch was kept:

i. — *and made before the breeze her way.*—[MS. D. erased.]

ii. — *their doubtful shimmer from the deep.*—[MS. D. erased.]

1. [William Bligh, the son of Cornish parents, was born September 9,

His dreams were of Old England's welcome shore,  
Of toils rewarded, and of dangers o'er ;

20

1754 (? 1753). He served under Cook in his second voyage in the *Resolution*, 1772-75, as sailing-master ; and, in 1782, fought under Lord Howe at Gibraltar. He married a daughter of William Betham, first collector of customs in the Isle of Man, and hence his connection with Fletcher Christian, who belonged to a Manx family, and the midshipman Peter Hayward, who was the son of a Deemster. He was appointed to the *Bounty* in December, 1787, and in 1791 to the *Providence*, which was despatched to the Society Islands to obtain a fresh cargo of bread-fruit trees in place of those which were thrown overboard by the mutineers. He commanded the *Glatton* at Copenhagen, May 21, 1801, and on that and other occasions served with distinction. He was made Governor of New South Wales in 1805, but was forcibly deposed in an insurrection headed by Major Johnston, January, 1808. He was kept in prison till 1810, but on his return to England his administration of his office was approved, and Johnston was cashiered. He was advanced to the rank of Vice-Admiral of the Blue in 1814, and died, December 7, 1817.

In his *Narrative* Bligh describes the mutiny as "a close-planned act of villainy," and attributes the conspiracy not to his own harshness, or to disloyalty provoked by "real or imaginary grievances," but to the contrast of life on board ship, "in ever climbing up the climbing wave," with the unearned luxuries of Tahiti, "the allurements of dissipation . . . the female connections," which the sailors had left behind. Besides his own apology, there are the sworn statements of the two midshipmen, Hayward and Hallet, and others, which Bligh published in answer to a pamphlet which Edward Christian, afterwards Chief Justice of Ely, wrote in defence of his brother Fletcher. The evidence against Bligh is contained in the MS. journal of the boatswain's mate, James Morrison, which was saved, as by a miracle, from the wreck of the *Pandora*, and is quoted by Sir John Barrow, Lady Belcher, and other authorities. There is, too, the testimony of John Adams (Alexander Smith), as recorded by Captain Beachey, and, as additional proof of indifference and tyrannical behaviour, there are Bligh's own letters to Peter Hayward's mother and uncle (March 26, April 2, 1790), and W. C. Wentworth's account of his administration as Governor of New South Wales (see *A Statistical Description, etc.*, 1819, p. 166). It cannot be gainsaid that Bligh was a man of integrity and worth, and that he was upheld and esteemed by the Admiralty. Morrison's Journal, though in parts corroborated by Bligh's MS. Journal, is not altogether convincing, and the testimony of John Adams in his old age counts for little. But according to his own supporters he "damned" his men though not the officers, and his own *Narrative*, as well as Morrison's Journal, proves that he was suspicious, and that he underrated and misunderstood the character and worth of his subordinates. He was responsible for the prolonged sojourn at Tahiti, and he should have remembered that time and distance are powerful solvents, and that between Portsmouth Hard and the untracked waters of the Pacific, "all Arcadia" had intervened. He was a man of imperfect sympathies, wanting in tact and fineness, but in the hour of need he behaved like a hero, and saved himself and others by submission to duty and strenuous self-control. Moreover, he "helped England" not once or twice, "in the brave days of old." (See *A*

His name was added to the glorious roll  
 Of those who search the storm-surrounded Pole.  
 The worst was over, and the rest seemed sure,<sup>1</sup>  
 And why should not his slumber be secure ?  
 Alas ! his deck was trod by unwilling feet,  
 And wilder hands would hold the vessel's sheet ;  
 Young hearts, which languished for some sunny isle,  
 Where summer years and summer women smile ;  
 Men without country, who, too long estranged,  
 Had found no native home, or found it changed, 30  
 And, half uncivilised, preferred the cave  
 Of some soft savage to the uncertain wave—  
 The gushing fruits that nature gave untilled ;  
 The wood without a path—but where they willed ;  
 The field o'er which promiscuous Plenty poured  
 Her horn ; the equal land without a lord ;  
 The wish—which ages have not yet subdued  
 In man—to have no master save his mood ;<sup>2</sup>  
 The earth, whose mine was on its face, unsold,  
 The glowing sun and produce all its gold ; 40  
 The Freedom which can call each grot a home ;  
 The general garden, where all steps may roam,  
 Where Nature owns a nation as her child,  
 Exulting in the enjoyment of the wild ;<sup>3</sup>

i. *And all enjoy the exuberance of the wild.*—[MS. D. erased.]

*Narrative, etc.*, 1790 ; *The Naval History of Great Britain*, by E. P. Brenton, 1823, i. 96, sq. ; *Royal Naval Biography*, by John Marshall, 1823-35, ii. pp. 747, sq. ; *Mutineers of the Bounty*, by Lady Belcher, 1870, p. 8 ; *Dictionary of National Biography*, art. "Bligh.")]

1. ["A few hours before, my situation had been peculiarly flattering. I had a ship in the most perfect order, and well stored with every necessary, both for service and health ; . . . the voyage was two thirds completed, and the remaining part in a very promising way."—*A Narrative of the Mutiny, etc.*, by Lieut. W. Bligh, 1790, p. 9.]

2. ["The women at Otaheite are handsome, mild, and cheerful in their manners and conversation, possessed of great sensibility, and have sufficient delicacy to make them admired and beloved. The chiefs were so much attached to our people, that they rather encouraged their stay among them than otherwise, and even made them promises of large possessions. Under these and many other attendant circumstances equally desirable, it is now, perhaps, not so much to be wondered at . . . that a set of sailors, most of them void of connections, should be led away, especially when they imagined it in their power to fix themselves, in the midst of plenty, . . . on the finest island in the world, where they need not labour, and where the allurements of dissipation are beyond anything that can be conceived."—*Ibid.*, p. 10.]



Their shells, their fruits, the only wealth they know,  
Their unexploring navy, the canoe;<sup>i</sup>  
Their sport, the dashing breakers and the chase;  
Their strangest sight, an European face :—  
Such was the country which these strangers yearned  
To see again—a sight they dearly earned. 50

## III.

Awake, bold Bligh ! the foe is at the gate !  
Awake ! awake !——Alas ! it is too late !  
Fiercely beside thy cot the mutineer  
Stands, and proclaims the reign of rage and fear.  
Thy limbs are bound, the bayonet at thy breast ;  
The hands, which trembled at thy voice, arrest ;  
Dragged o'er the deck, no more at thy command  
The obedient helm shall veer, the sail expand ;  
That savage Spirit, which would lull by wrath  
Its desperate escape from Duty's path, 60  
Glares round thee, in the scarce believing eyes  
Of those who fear the Chief they sacrifice :  
For ne'er can Man his conscience all assuage,  
Unless he drain the wine of Passion—Rage.

## IV.

In vain, not silenced by the eye of Death,  
Thou call'st the loyal with thy menaced breath :—  
They come not ; they are few, and, overawed,  
Must acquiesce, while sterner hearts applaud.  
In vain thou dost demand the cause : a curse  
Is all the answer, with the threat of worse. 70  
Full in thine eyes is waved the glittering blade,  
Close to thy throat the pointed bayonet laid.  
The levelled muskets circle round thy breast  
In hands as steeled to do the deadly rest.  
Thou dar'st them to their worst, exclaiming—" Fire !"  
But they who pitted not could yet admire ;  
Some lurking remnant of their former awe  
Restrained them longer than their broken law ;

i. *Their formidable fleet the quick canoe.*—[MS. D. erased.]

They would not dip their souls at once in blood,  
But left thee to the mercies of the flood.<sup>1</sup> 80

## v.

"Hoist out the boat!" was now the leader's cry;  
And who dare answer "No!" to Mutiny,  
In the first dawning of the drunken hour,  
The Saturnalia of unhopèd-for power?  
The boat is lowered with all the haste of hate,  
With its slight plank between thee and thy fate;  
Her only cargo such a scant supply  
As promises the death their hands deny;  
And just enough of water and of bread  
To keep, some days, the dying from the dead: 90  
Some cordage, canvass, sails, and lines, and twine,  
But treasures all to hermits of the brine,  
Were added after, to the earnest prayer  
Of those who saw no hope, save sea and air;  
And last, that trembling vassal of the Pole—  
The feeling compass—Navigation's soul.<sup>2</sup>

## vi.

And now the self-elected Chief finds time  
To stun the first sensation of his crime,

1. ["Just before sunrising Mr. Christian, with the master-at-arms, gunner's mate, and Thomas Burkitt, seaman, came into my cabin while I was asleep, and, seizing me, tied my hands with a cord behind my back, and threatened me with instant death if I spoke or made the least noise. I, however, called out so loud as to alarm every one; but they had already secured the officers who were not of their party, by placing sentinels at their doors. There were three men at my cabin door, besides the four within; Christian had only a cutlass in his hand, the others had muskets and bayonets. I was hauled out of bed, and forced on deck in my shirt, suffering great pain from the tightness with which they had tied my hands. . . . The boatswain was now ordered to hoist the launch out. The boat being hoisted out, Mr. Hayward and Mr. Hallet, midshipmen, were ordered into it; upon which I demanded the cause of such an order, and endeavoured to persuade some one to a sense of duty; but it was to no effect: 'Hold your tongue, sir, or you are dead this instant,' was constantly repeated to me."—*A Narrative of the Mutiny, etc.*, by Lieut. W. Bligh, 1790, pp. 1, 2.]

2. ["The boatswain, and seamen who were to go in the boat, were allowed to collect twine, canvass, lines, sails, cordage, an eight-and-twenty-gallon cask of water, and the carpenter to take his tool-chest. Mr. Samuel got one hundred and fifty pounds of bread with a small quantity of rum and wine . . . also a quadrant and compass."—*Ibid.*, p. 3.]

And raise it in his followers—"Ho! the bowl!"<sup>1</sup>  
 Lest passion should return to reason's shoal.<sup>100</sup>  
 "Brandy for heroes!"<sup>2</sup> Burke could once exclaim—  
 No doubt a liquid path to Epic fame;  
 And such the new-born heroes found it here,  
 And drained the draught with an applauding cheer.  
 "Huzza! for Otaheite!"<sup>3</sup> was the cry.  
 How strange such shouts from sons of Mutiny!  
 The gentle island, and the genial soil,  
 The friendly hearts, the feasts without a toil,  
 The courteous manners but from nature caught,  
 The wealth unhoarded, and the love unbought;<sup>110</sup>  
 Could these have charms for rudest sea-boys, driven  
 Before the mast by every wind of heaven?  
 And now, even now prepared with others' woes  
 To earn mild Virtue's vain desire, repose?  
 Alas! such is our nature! all but aim  
 At the same end by pathways not the same;  
 Our means—our birth—our nation, and our name,  
 Our fortune—temper—even our outward frame,  
 Are far more potent o'er our yielding clay  
 Than aught we know beyond our little day.<sup>120</sup>  
 Yet still there whispers the small voice within,

- i. *And lull it in his followers—"Ho! the dram"*  
*Rebellion's sacrament, and paschal lamb.*  
*(A broken metaphor of flesh for wine*  
*But Catholics know the exchange is none of mine.—[MS. D. erased.]*  
*And raise it in his followers—Ho! the bowl*  
*That sure Nepenthe for the wavering [soul].—[MS. D. erased.]*

1. ["The mutineers now hurried those they meant to get rid of into the boat, . . . Christian directed a dram to be served to each of his own crew."—*A Narrative, etc.*, 1790, p. 3.]

2. [It was Johnson, not Burke, who upheld the claims of brandy.—"He was persuaded," says Boswell, "to drink one glass of it [claret]. He shook his head, and said, 'Poor stuff!—No, Sir, claret is the liquor for boys; port for men; but he who aspires to be a hero (smiling) must drink brandy.'"—Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 1848, p. 627.]

3. ["While the ship . . . was in sight she steered to the W.N.W., but I considered this only a feint; for when we were sent away, 'Huzza for Otaheite!' was frequently heard among the mutineers."—*A Narrative, etc.*, 1790, pp. 4-8. This statement is questioned by Sir John Barrow (*The Eventful History, etc.*, 1831, p. 91), on the grounds that the mutiny was the result of a sudden determination on the part of Christian, and that liberty, and not the delights of Tahiti, was the object which the mutineers had in view.]

Heard through Gain's silence, and o'er Glory's din :  
 Whatever creed be taught, or land be trod,  
 Man's conscience is the Oracle of God.<sup>1</sup>

## VII.

The launch is crowded with the faithful few  
 Who wait their Chief, a melancholy crew :  
 But some remained reluctant on the deck  
 Of that proud vessel—now a moral wreck—  
 And viewed their Captain's fate with piteous eyes ;  
 While others scoffed his augured miseries, 130  
 Sneered at the prospect of his pigmy sail,  
 And the slight bark so laden and so frail.  
 The tender nautilus, who steers his prow,  
 The sea-born sailor of his shell canoe,  
 The ocean Mab, the fairy of the sea,  
 Seems far less fragile, and, alas ! more free.  
 He, when the lightning-winged Tornados sweep  
 The surge, is safe—his port is in the deep—  
 And triumphs o'er the armadas of Mankind,  
 Which shake the World, yet crumble in the wind. 140

## VIII.

When all was now prepared, the vessel clear  
 Which hailed her master in the mutineer,  
 A seaman, less obdurate than his mates,  
 Showed the vain pity which but irritates ;  
 Watched his late Chieftain with exploring eye,  
 And told, in signs, repentant sympathy ;  
 Held the moist shaddock to his parchéd mouth,  
 Which felt Exhaustion's deep and bitter drouth.  
 But soon observed, this guardian was withdrawn,  
 Nor further Mercy clouds Rebellion's dawn.<sup>2</sup> 150

1. [A variant of Pope's lines—

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,  
 His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

*Essay on Man*, iii. 305, 306.]

2. ["Isaac Martin, one of the guard over me, I saw, had an inclination to assist me ; and as he fed me with shaddock (my lips being quite parched with my endeavours to bring about a change), we explained our wishes to each other by our looks ; but this being observed, Martin was instantly removed from me."—*A Narrative, etc.*, 1790, p. 4.]

Then forward stepped the bold and froward boy  
 His Chief had cherished only to destroy,  
 And, pointing to the helpless prow beneath,  
 Exclaimed, "Depart at once ! delay is death !"  
 Yet then, even then, his feelings ceased not all :  
 In that last moment could a word recall  
 Remorse for the black deed as yet half done,  
 And what he hid from many showed to one :  
 When Bligh in stern reproach demanded where  
 Was now his grateful sense of former care ? 160  
 Where all his hopes to see his name aspire,  
 And blazon Britain's thousand glories higher ?  
 His feverish lips thus broke their gloomy spell,  
 "'Tis that ! 'tis that ! I am in hell ! in hell !"  
 No more he said ; but urging to the bark  
 His Chief, commits him to his fragile ark ;  
 These the sole accents from his tongue that fell,  
 But volumes lurked below his fierce farewell.

1. ["Christian . . . then . . . said, 'Come, Captain Bligh, your officers and men are now in the boat ; and you must go with them ; if you attempt to make the least resistance you will instantly be put to death ;' and without any farther ceremony, holding me by the cord that tied my hands, with a tribe of armed ruffians about me, I was forced over the side, where they untied my hands. Being in the boat, we were veered astern by a rope. A few pieces of pork were thrown to me and some clothes. . . . After having undergone a great deal of ridicule, and being kept for some time to make sport for these unfeeling wretches, we were at length cast adrift in the open ocean. . . . When they were forcing me out of the ship, I asked him [Christian] if this treatment was a proper return for the many instances he had received of my friendship ? He appeared disturbed at the question, and answered, with much emotion, 'That,—Captain Bligh,—that is the thing ;—I am in hell—I am in hell.'"]—*A Narrative, etc.*, 1790, pp. 4-8.

Bligh's testimony on this point does not correspond with Morrison's journal, or with the evidence of the master, John Fryer, given at the court-martial, September 12, 1792. According to Morrison, when the boatswain tried to pacify Christian, he replied, "It is too late, I have been in hell for this fortnight past, and am determined to bear it no longer." The master's version is that he appealed to Christian, and that Christian exclaimed, "Hold your tongue, sir, I have been in hell for weeks past ; Captain Bligh has brought all this on himself." Bligh seems to have flattered himself that in the act of mutiny Christian was seized with remorse, but it is clear that the wish was father to the thought. Moreover, on being questioned, Fryer, who was a supporter of the captain, explained that Christian referred to quarrels, to abuse in general, and more particularly to a recent accusation of stealing cocoa-nuts. (See *The Eventful History, etc.*, 1831, pp. 84, 208, 209.)]

## IX.

The arctic <sup>1</sup> Sun rose broad above the wave ;  
 The breeze now sank, now whispered from his cave ; 170  
 As on the Æolian harp, his fitful wings  
 Now swelled, now fluttered o'er his Ocean strings.<sup>1</sup>  
 With slow, despairing oar, the abandoned skiff  
 Ploughs its drear progress to the scarce seen cliff,  
 Which lifts its peak a cloud above the main :  
*That* boat and ship shall never meet again !

But 'tis not mine to tell their tale of grief,  
 Their constant peril, and their scant relief ;  
 Their days of danger, and their nights of pain ;  
 Their manly courage even when deemed in vain ; 180  
 The sapping famine, rendering scarce a son  
 Known to his mother in the skeleton ;<sup>2</sup>  
 The ills that lessened still their little store,  
 And starved even Hunger till he wrung no more ;  
 The varying frowns and favours of the deep,  
 That now almost ingulfs, then leaves to creep  
 With crazy oar and shattered strength along  
 The tide that yields reluctant to the strong ;  
 The incessant fever of that arid thirst<sup>3</sup>  
 Which welcomes, as a well, the clouds that burst 190  
 Above their naked bones, and feels delight  
 In the cold drenching of the stormy night,  
 And from the outspread canvass gladly wrings  
 A drop to moisten Life's all-gasping springs ;  
 The savage foe escaped, to seek again  
 More hospitable shelter from the main ;  
 The ghastly Spectres which were doomed at last

i. *Now swelled now sighed along* —.—[*MS. D. erased.*]

1. [Byron must mean "antarctic." "Arctic" is used figuratively for "cold," but not as a synonym for "polar."]

2. ["At dawn of day some of my people seemed half dead ; our appearances were horrible ; and I could look no way, but I caught the eye of some one in distress."—*A Narrative, etc.*, p. 37. Later on, p. 80, when the launch reached Timor, he speaks of the crew as "so many spectres, whose ghastly countenances, if the cause had been unknown, would have excited terror rather than pity."]

3. [Bligh dwells on the misery caused to the luckless crew by drenching rains and by hunger, but says that no one suffered from thirst.]

To tell as true a tale of dangers past,  
 As ever the dark annals of the deep  
 Disclosed for man to dread or woman weep. 200

## X.

We leave them to their fate, but not unknown  
 Nor unredressed. Revenge may have her own :<sup>i</sup>  
 Roused Discipline aloud proclaims their cause,  
 And injured Navies urge their broken laws.  
 Pursue we on his track the mutineer,  
 Whom distant vengeance had not taught to fear.  
 Wide o'er the wave—away ! away ! away !  
 Once more his eyes shall hail the welcome bay ;  
 Once more the happy shores without a law  
 Receive the outlaws whom they lately saw ; 210  
 Nature, and Nature's goddess—Woman—woos  
 To lands where, save their conscience, none accuse ;  
 Where all partake the earth without dispute,<sup>ii</sup>  
 And bread itself is gathered as a fruit ;<sup>i</sup>  
 Where none contest the fields, the woods, the streams :—  
 The goldless Age, where Gold disturbs no dreams,  
 Inhabits or inhabited the shore,  
 Till Europe taught them better than before ;  
 Bestowed her customs, and amended theirs,  
 But left her vices also to their heirs.<sup>2</sup> 220  
 Away with this ! behold them as they were,  
 Do good with Nature, or with Nature err.  
 "Huzza ! for Otaheite !" was the cry,  
 As stately swept the gallant vessel by.  
 The breeze springs up ; the lately flapping sail  
 Extends its arch before the growing gale ;

i. *Nor yet unpitied. Vengeance had her own.*—[MS. D. erased.]

ii. — *the undisputed root.*—[MS. D. erased.]

1. The now celebrated bread fruit, to transplant which Captain Bligh's expedition was undertaken.

[The bread-fruit (*Artocarpus incisa*) was discovered by Dampier, in 1688. "Cook says that its taste is insipid, with a slight sweetness, somewhat resembling that of the crumb of wheaten bread mixed with a Jerusalem artichoke."—*The Eventful History, etc.*, 1831, p. 43.]

2. [See *Letters from Mr. Fletcher Christian* (pseud.), 1796, pp. 48, 49.]

In swifter ripples stream aside the seas,  
Which her bold bow flings off with dashing ease.  
Thus Argo ploughed the Euxine's virgin foam,<sup>i</sup>  
But those she wafted still looked back to home ;   230  
These spurn their country with their rebel bark,  
And fly her as the raven fled the Ark ;  
And yet they seek to nestle with the dove,  
And tame their fiery spirits down to Love.

End of Canto 1<sup>st</sup>, J<sup>n</sup> 14.

i. *Thus Argo plunged into the Euxine's foam.*—[MS. D. erased.]



## CANTO THE SECOND.



## I.

How pleasant were the songs of Toobonai,<sup>1</sup>  
 When Summer's Sun went down the coral bay !  
 Come, let us to the islet's softest shade,  
 And hear the warbling birds ! the damsels said :

1. The first three sections are taken from an actual song of the Tonga Islanders, of which a prose translation is given in "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands." Toobonai is *not* however one of them ; but was one of those where Christian and the mutineers took refuge. I have altered and added, but have retained as much as possible of the original.

[" Whilst we were talking of *Vavdoo tōoa Lico*, the women said to us, ' Let us repair to the back of the island to contemplate the setting sun : there let us listen to the warbling of the birds, and the cooing of the wood-pigeon. We will gather flowers from the burying-place at *Matāwto*, and partake of refreshments prepared for us at *Lico O'nē* : we will then bathe in the sea, and rinse ourselves in the *Vāoo A'ca* ; we will anoint our skins in the sun with sweet-scented oil, and will plait in wreaths the flowers gathered at *Matāwto*.' And now as we stand motionless on the eminence over *Anoo Mānoo*, the whistling of the wind among the branches of the lofty *toa* shall fill us with a pleasing melancholy ; or our minds shall be seized with astonishment as we behold the roaring surf below, endeavouring but in vain to tear away the firm rocks. Oh ! how much happier shall we be thus employed, than when engaged in the troublesome and insipid cares of life !

" Now as night comes on, we must return to the *Moāa*. But hark !—hear you not the sound of the mats?—they are practising a *bo-odla* [' a kind of dance performed by torch-light '], to be performed to-night on the *malāi*, at Tanéa. Let us also go there. How will that scene of rejoicing call to our minds the many festivals held there, before *Vavdoo* was torn to pieces by war ! Alas ! how destructive is war ! Behold ! how it has rendered the land productive of weeds, and opened untimely graves for departed heroes ! Our chiefs can now no longer enjoy the sweet pleasure of wandering alone by moonlight in search of their mistresses. But let us banish sorrow from our hearts : since we are at war, we must think and act like the natives of *Fiji*, who first taught

The wood-dove from the forest depth shall coo,  
 Like voices of the Gods from Bolotoo;<sup>1</sup>  
 We'll cull the flowers that grow above the dead,  
 For these most bloom where rests the warrior's head;  
 And we will sit in Twilight's face, and see  
 The sweet Moon glancing through the Tooa<sup>2</sup> tree, 10  
 The lofty accents of whose sighing bough  
 Shall sadly please us as we lean below;  
 Or climb the steep, and view the surf in vain  
 Wrestle with rocky giants o'er the main,  
 Which spurn in columns back the baffled spray.  
 How beautiful are these! how happy they,  
 Who, from the toil and tumult of their lives,  
 Steal to look down where nought but Ocean strives!  
 Even He too loves at times the blue lagoon,  
 And smooths his ruffled mane beneath the Moon. 20

## II.

Yes—from the sepulchre we'll gather flowers,  
 Then feast like spirits in their promised bowers,  
 Then plunge and revel in the rolling surf,  
 Then lay our limbs along the tender turf,  
 And, wet and shining from the sportive toil,

us this destructive art. Let us therefore enjoy the present time, for to-morrow perhaps, or the next day, we may die. We will dress ourselves with *chi coola*, and put bands of white *tappa* round our waists. We will plait thick wreaths of *jiale* for our heads, and prepare strings of *hoomi* for our necks, that their whiteness may show off the colour of our skins. Mark how the uncultivated spectators are profuse of their applause! But now the dance is over: let us remain here to-night and feast and be cheerful, and to-morrow we will depart for the Mooa. How troublesome are the young men, begging for our wreaths of flowers! while they say in their flattery, 'See how charming these young girls look coming from *Licoo*!—how beautiful are their skins, diffusing around a fragrance like the flowering precipice of *Mataloco*!—Let us also visit *Licoo*. We will depart to-morrow.'—*An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands, etc.*, 1817, i. 307, 308. It should be noted that John Martin, M.D. (1789-1869) compiled this work from Mariner's "Communications."

1. [Bolotoo is a visionary island to the north westward, the home of the Gods. The souls of chieftains, priests, and, possibly, the gentry, ascend to Bolotoo after death; but the souls of the lower classes "come to dust" with their bodies.—*An Account, etc.*, 1817, ii. 104, 105.]

2. [The toa, or drooping casuarina (*C. equisetifolia*). "Formerly the toa was regarded as sacred, and planted in groves round the 'Morais' of Tahiti."—*Polynesia*, by G. F. Angas, 1866, p. 44.]

Anoint our bodies with the fragrant oil,  
 And plait our garlands gathered from the grave,  
 And wear the wreaths that sprung from out the brave.  
 But lo! night comes, the Mooa<sup>1</sup> woos us back,  
 The sound of mats<sup>2</sup> are heard along our track; 30  
 Anon the torchlight dance shall fling its sheen  
 In flashing mazes o'er the Marly's<sup>3</sup> green;  
 And we too will be there; we too recall  
 The memory bright with many a festival,  
 Ere Fiji blew the shell of war, when foes  
 For the first time were wafted in canoes.<sup>4</sup>  
 Alas! for them the flower of manhood bleeds;  
 Alas! for them our fields are rank with weeds:  
 Forgotten is the rapture, or unknown,<sup>5</sup>  
 Of wandering with the Moon and Love alone. 40  
 But be it so:—*they* taught us how to wield  
 The club, and rain our arrows o'er the field:  
 Now let them reap the harvest of their art!  
 But feast to-night! to-morrow we depart.  
 Strike up the dance! the Cava bowl<sup>4</sup> fill high!

i. *Ere Fiji's children blew the shell of war*

*And armed Canoes brought Fury from afar.*—[MS. D. erased.]

ii. *Too long forgotten in the pleasure ground.*—[MS. D. erased.]

x. [The capital town of an island.]

2. ["The preparation of *gnatoo*, or *tappa*-cloth, from the inner bark of the paper mulberry tree, occupies much of the time of the Tongan women. The bark, after being soaked in water, is beaten out by means of wooden mallets, which are grooved longitudinally. . . . Early in the morning," says Mariner, "when the air is calm and still, the beating of the *gnatoo* at all the plantations about has a very pleasing effect; some sounds being near at hand, and others almost lost by the distance, some a little more acute, others more grave, and all with remarkable regularity, produce a musical variety that is . . . heightened by the singing of the birds, and the cheerful influence of the scene."—*Polynesia*, 1846, pp. 249, 250.]

3. [Marly, or Maláí, is an open grass plat set apart for public ceremonies.]

4. [Cava, "kava," or "ava," is an intoxicating drink, prepared from the roots and stems of a kind of pepper (*Piper methysticum*). Mariner (*An Account, etc.*, 1817, ii. 183–206) gives a highly interesting and suggestive account of the process of brewing the kava, and of the solemn "kava-drinking," which was attended with ceremonial rites. Briefly, a large wooden bowl, about three feet in diameter, and one foot in depth in the centre (see, for a typical specimen, King Thakombau's kava-bowl, in the British Museum), is placed in front of the king or chief, who sits in the midst, surrounded by his guests and courtiers. A

Drain every drop !—to-morrow we may die.  
 In summer garments be our limbs arrayed ;  
 Around our waists the Tappa's white displayed ;  
 Thick wreaths shall form our coronal,<sup>1</sup> like Spring's,  
 And round our necks shall glance the Hooni strings ; 50  
 So shall their brighter hues contrast the glow  
 Of the dusk bosoms that beat high below.

## III.

But now the dance is o'er—yet stay awhile ;  
 Ah, pause ! nor yet put out the social smile.  
 To-morrow for the Mooa we depart,  
 But not to-night—to-night is for the heart.  
 Again bestow the wreaths we gently woo,  
 Ye young Enchantresses of gay Licoo !<sup>2</sup>  
 How lovely are your forms ! how every sense  
 Bows to your beauties, softened, but intense,<sup>1</sup> 60  
 Like to the flowers on Mataloco's steep,  
 Which fling their fragrance far athwart the deep !—

i. *How beauteous are their skins, how softly all  
 The forms of Beauty wrap them like a pall.*—[MS. D. erased.]

portion of kava root is handed to each person present, who chews it to a pulp, and then deposits his quid in the kava bowl. Water being gradually added, the roots are well squeezed and twisted by various "curvilinear turns" of the hands and arms through the "fow," *i.e.* shavings of fibrous bark. When the "kava is in the cup," quaihs made of the "unexpanded leaf of the banana" are handed round to the guests, and the symposium begins. Mariner (*ibid.*, p. 205, *note*) records a striking feature of the preliminary rites, a consecration or symbolic "grace before" drinking. "When a god has no priest, as Tali-y-Toobó [the Supreme Deity of the Tongans], no person . . . presides at the head of his cava circle, the place being left . . . vacant, but which it is supposed the god invisibly occupies. . . . And they go through the usual form of words, as if the first cup was actually filled and presented to the god : thus, before any cup is filled, the man by the side of the bowl says . . . 'The cava is in the cup : ' the mataboole answers . . . 'Give it to our god : ' but this is mere form, for there is no cup filled for the god." (See, too, *The Making of Religion*, by A. Lang, 1900, p. 279.)

1. [The gnatoo, which is a piece of tappa cloth, is worn in different ways. "Twenty yards of fine cloth are required by a Tahitian woman to make one dress, which is worn from the waist downwards."—*Polynesia*, 1866, p. 45.]

2. [Licoo is the name given to the back of or unfrequented part of any island.]

We too will see Licoo ; but—oh ! my heart !—  
What do I say ?—to-morrow we depart !

## IV.

Thus rose a song—the harmony of times  
Before the winds blew Europe o'er these climes.  
True, they had vices—such are Nature's growth—  
But only the barbarian's—we have both ;  
The sordor of civilisation, mixed  
With all the savage which Man's fall hath fixed. 70  
Who hath not seen Dissimulation's reign,  
The prayers of Abel linked to deeds of Cain ?  
Who such would see may from his lattice view  
The Old World more degraded than the New,—  
Now *new* no more, save where Columbia rears  
Twin giants, born by Freedom to her spheres,  
Where Chimborazo, over air,—earth,—wave,—  
Glares with his Titan eye, and sees no slave.<sup>1</sup>

## V.

Such was this ditty of Tradition's days,  
Which to the dead a lingering fame conveys 80  
In song, where Fame as yet hath left no sign  
Beyond the sound whose charm is half divine ;  
Which leaves no record to the sceptic eye,  
But yields young History all to Harmony ;  
A boy Achilles, with the Centaur's lyre  
In hand, to teach him to surpass his sire.  
For one long-cherished ballad's<sup>2</sup> simple stave,  
Rung from the rock, or mingled with the wave,

ii. *Glares with his mountain eye* —.—[*MS. D. erased.*]

1. [*The Morning Chronicle*, November 6, 1822, prints the following proclamation of José Maria Carreno, Commandant-General of Panama: "Inhabitants of the Isthmus! The Genius of History, which has everywhere crowned our arms, announces peace to Colombia. . . . From the banks of Orinoco to the towering summits of Chimborazo not a single enemy exists, and those who proudly marched towards the abode of the ancient children of the Sun have either perished or remain prisoners expecting our clemency."]

2. [Compare "a wise man's sentiment," as quoted by Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun: "He believed if a man were permitted to make all the Ballads, he need not care who should make the Laws."—*An Account of a Conversation, etc.*, 1704, p. 10.]

Or from the bubbling streamlet's grassy side,  
 Or gathering mountain echoes as they glide, 90  
 Hath greater power o'er each true heart and ear,  
 Than all the columns Conquest's minions rear;<sup>1</sup>  
 Invites, when Hieroglyphics<sup>1</sup> are a theme  
 For sages' labours, or the student's dream;  
 Attracts, when History's volumes are a toil,—  
 The first, the freshest bud of Feeling's soil.  
 Such was this rude rhyme—rhyme is of the rude—  
 But such inspired the Norseman's solitude,  
 Who came and conquered; such, wherever rise  
 Lands which no foes destroy or civilise, 100  
 Exist: and what can our accomplished art  
 Of verse do more than reach the awakened heart?<sup>2</sup>

## VI.

And sweetly now those untaught melodies  
 Broke the luxurious silence of the skies,  
 The sweet siesta of a summer day,  
 The tropic afternoon of Toobonai,  
 When every flower was bloom, and air was balm,  
 And the first breath began to stir the palm,  
 The first yet voiceless wind to urge the wave  
 All gently to refresh the thirsty cave, 110  
 Where sat the Songstress with the stranger boy,  
 Who taught her Passion's desolating joy,  
 Too powerful over every heart, but most  
 O'er those who know not how it may be lost;  
 O'er those who, burning in the new-born fire,  
 Like martyrs revel in their funeral pyre,  
 With such devotion to their ecstasy,  
 That Life knows no such rapture as to die:  
 And die they do; for earthly life has nought  
 Matched with that burst of Nature, even in thought;

i. *Than all the records History's annals rear.*—[MS. D. erased.]

1. [Jean François Champollion (1790-1832), at a meeting of the *Académie des inscriptions*, at Paris, September 17, 1822, announced the discovery of the alphabet of hieroglyphics.]

2. [So, too, Shelley, in his Preface to the *Revolt of Islam*, speaks of "that more essential attribute of Poetry, the power of awakening in others sensations like those which animate my own bosom."]

And all our dreams of better life above 121  
 But close in one eternal gush of Love.

## VII.

There sat the gentle savage of the wild,  
 In growth a woman, though in years a child,  
 As childhood dates within our colder clime,  
 Where nought is ripened rapidly save crime;  
 The infant of an infant world, as pure  
 From Nature—lovely, warm, and premature;  
 Dusky like night, but night with all her stars;  
 Or cavern sparkling with its native spars; 130  
 With eyes that were a language and a spell,  
 A form like Aphrodite's in her shell,  
 With all her loves around her on the deep,  
 Voluptuous as the first approach of sleep;  
 Yet full of life—for through her tropic cheek  
 The blush would make its way, and all but speak;  
 The sun-born blood suffused her neck, and threw  
 O'er her clear nut-brown skin a lucid hue,  
 Like coral reddening through the darkened wave,  
 Which draws the diver to the crimson cave. 140  
 Such was this daughter of the southern seas,  
 Herself a billow in her energies,<sup>i</sup>  
 To bear the bark of others' happiness,  
 Nor feel a sorrow till their joy grew less:  
 Her wild and warm yet faithful bosom knew  
 No joy like what it gave; her hopes ne'er drew  
 Aught from Experience, that chill touchstone, whose  
 Sad proof reduces all things from their hues:  
 She feared no ill, because she knew it not,  
 Or what she knew was soon—too soon—forgot: 150  
 Her smiles and tears had passed, as light winds pass  
 O'er lakes to ruffle, not destroy, their glass,  
 Whose depths unsearched, and fountains from the hill,  
 Restore their surface, in itself so still,  
 Until the Earthquake tear the Naiad's cave,  
 Root up the spring, and trample on the wave,

i. *And she herself the daughter of the Seas  
 As full of gems and energy as these.*—[MS. D. erased.]

And crush the living waters to a mass,  
 The amphibious desert of the dank morass !  
 And must their fate be hers ? The eternal change  
 But grasps Humanity with quicker range ; 160  
 And they who fall but fall as worlds will fall,  
 To rise, if just, a Spirit o'er them all.

## VIII.

And who is he ? the blue-eyed northern child <sup>1</sup>  
 Of isles more known to man, but scarce less wild ;  
 The fair-haired offspring of the Hebrides,  
 Where roars the Pentland with its whirling seas ;

1. [George Stewart was born at Ronaldshay (circ. 1764), but was living at Stromness in 1780 (where his father's house, "The White House," is still shown), when, on the homeward voyage of the *Resolution*, Cook and Bligh were hospitably entertained by his parents. He was of honourable descent. His mother's ancestors were sprung from a half-brother of Mary Stuart's, and his father's family dated back to 1400. When he was at Timor, Bligh gave a "description of the pirates" for purposes of identification by the authorities at Calcutta and elsewhere. "George Stewart, midshipman, aged 23 years, is five feet seven inches high, good complexion, dark hair, slender made . . . small face, and black eyes; tatowed on the left breast with a star," etc. Lieutenant Bligh took Stewart with him, partly in return for the "civilities" at Stromness, but also because "he was a seaman, and had always borne a good character." Alexander Smith told Captain Beachey (*Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific*, 1831, Part I. p. 53) that it was Stewart who advised Christian "to take possession of the ship," but Peter Hayward, who survived to old age, strenuously maintained that this was a calumny, that Stewart was forcibly detained in his cabin, and that he would not, in any case, have taken part in the mutiny. He had, perhaps, already wooed and won a daughter of the isles, and when the *Bounty* revisited Tahiti, September 20, 1789, he was put ashore, and took up his quarters in her father's house. There he remained till March, 1791, when he "voluntarily surrendered himself" to the captain of the *Pandora*, and was immediately put in irons. The story of his parting from his bride is told in *A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean in the Ship Duff* (by W. Wilson), 1799, p. 360: "The history of Peggy Stewart marks a tenderness of heart that never will be heard without emotion. . . . They had lived with the old chief in the most tender state of endearment; a beautiful little girl had been the fruit of their union, and was at the breast when the *Pandora* arrived. . . . Frantic with grief, the unhappy Peggy . . . flew with her infant in a canoe to the arms of her husband. She was separated from him by violence, and conveyed on shore in a state of despair and grief too big for utterance . . . she sank into the deepest dejection, pined under a rapid decay . . . and fell a victim to her feelings, dying literally of a broken heart." Stewart was drowned or killed by an accident during the wreck of the *Pandora*, August 29, 1791. *Sunt lacrymæ rerum!* It is a mournful tale.]



Rocked in his cradle by the roaring wind,  
 The tempest-born in body and in mind,  
 His young eyes opening on the ocean-foam,  
 Had from that moment deemed the deep his home, 170  
 The giant comrade of his pensive moods,  
 The sharer of his craggy solitudes,  
 The only Mentor of his youth, where'er  
 His bark was borne; the sport of wave and air;  
 A careless thing, who placed his choice in chance,  
 Nursed by the legends of his land's romance;  
 Eager to hope, but not less firm to bear,  
 Acquainted with all feelings save despair.  
 Placed in the Arab's clime he would have been  
 As bold a rover as the sands have seen, 180  
 And braved their thirst with as enduring lip  
 As Ishmael, wafted on his Desert-Ship;<sup>1</sup>  
 Fixed upon Chili's shore, a proud cacique;  
 On Hellas' mountains, a rebellious Greek;<sup>2</sup>  
 Born in a tent, perhaps a Tamerlane;  
 Bred to a throne, perhaps unfit to reign.  
 For the same soul that rends its path to sway,  
 If reared to such, can find no further prey  
 Beyond itself, and must retrace its way,<sup>3</sup>  
 Plunging for pleasure into pain: the same 190  
 Spirit which made a Nero, Rome's worst shame,  
 A humbler state and discipline of heart,  
 Had formed his glorious namesake's counterpart;<sup>4</sup>

1. The "ship of the desert" is the Oriental figure for the camel or dromedary; and they deserve the metaphor well,—the former for his endurance, the latter for his swiftness. [Compare *The Deformed Transformed*, Part I. sc. 1, line 117.]

2. [Compare *The Age of Bronze*, lines 271-279.]

3. "Lucullus, when frugality could charm,  
 Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm."

POPE [*Moral Essays*, i. 218, 219.]

4. The consul Nero, who made the unequalled march which deceived Hannibal, and defeated Asdrubal; thereby accomplishing an achievement almost unrivalled in military annals. The first intelligence of his return, to Hannibal, was the sight of Asdrubal's head thrown into his camp. When Hannibal saw this, he exclaimed with a sigh, that "Rome would now be the mistress of the world." And yet to this victory of Nero's it might be owing that his imperial namesake reigned at all. But the infamy of one has eclipsed the glory of the other. When the name of "Nero" is heard, who thinks of the consul?—But

But grant his vices, grant them all his own,  
How small their theatre without a throne !

## IX.

Thou smilest :—these comparisons seem high  
To those who scan all things with dazzled eye ;  
Linked with the unknown name of one whose doom  
Has nought to do with glory or with Rome,  
With Chili, Hellas, or with Araby ;— 200  
Thou smilest ?—Smile ; 'tis better thus than sigh ;  
Yet such he might have been ; he was a man,  
A soaring spirit, ever in the van,  
A patriot hero or despotic chief,<sup>1</sup>  
To form a nation's glory or its grief,  
Born under auspices which make us more  
Or less than we delight to ponder o'er.  
But these are visions ; say, what was he here ?  
A blooming boy, a truant mutineer.  
The fair-haired Torquil, free as Ocean's spray, 210  
The husband of the bride of Toobonai.

## X.

By Neuha's side he sate, and watched the waters,—  
Neuha, the sun-flower of the island daughters,  
Highborn, (a birth at which the herald smiles,  
Without a scutcheon for these secret isles,)  
Of a long race, the valiant and the free,  
The naked knights of savage chivalry,  
Whose grassy cairns ascend along the shore ;  
And thine—I've seen—Achilles ! do no more.<sup>1</sup>  
She, when the thunder-bearing strangers came, 220  
In vast canoes, begirt with bolts of flame,  
Topped with tall trees, which, loftier than the palm,  
Seemed rooted in the deep amidst its calm :  
But when the winds awakened, shot forth wings

i. *Tyrant or hero—patriot or a chief.*—[MS. erased.]

such are human things ! [For Hannibal's cry of despair, "Agnosceres fortunam Carthaginis !" see Livy, lib. xxvii. cap. li. s.f.]

i. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto II. stanza v. line 1, see *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 102, and 99, note 1.]

Broad as the cloud along the horizon flings,  
And swayed the waves, like cities of the sea,  
Making the very billows look less free ;—  
She, with her paddling oar and dancing prow,  
Shot through the surf, like reindeer through the snow,  
Swift-gliding o'er the breaker's whitening edge, 230  
Light as a Nereid in her ocean sledge,  
And gazed and wondered at the giant hulk,  
Which heaved from wave to wave its trampling bulk.  
The anchor dropped ; it lay along the deep,  
Like a huge lion in the sun asleep,  
While round it swarmed the Proas' flitting chain,  
Like summer bees that hum around his mane.

## XI.

The white man landed !—need the rest be told ?  
The New World stretched its dusk hand to the Old ;  
Each was to each a marvel, and the tie 240  
Of wonder warmed to better sympathy.  
Kind was the welcome of the sun-born sires,  
And kinder still their daughters' gentler fires.  
Their union grew : the children of the storm  
Found beauty linked with many a dusky form ;  
While these in turn admired the paler glow,  
Which seemed so white in climes that knew no snow.  
The chace, the race, the liberty to roam,  
The soil where every cottage showed a home ;  
The sea-spread net, the lightly launched canoe, 250  
Which stemmed the studded archipelago,  
O'er whose blue bosom rose the starry isles ;  
The healthy slumber, earned by sportive toils ;  
The palm, the loftiest Dryad of the woods,  
Within whose bosom infant Bacchus broods,  
While eagles scarce build higher than the crest  
Which shadows o'er the vineyard in her breast ;  
The Cava feast, the Yam, the Cocoa's root,  
Which bears at once the cup, and milk, and fruit ;  
The Bread-tree, which, without the ploughshare, yields  
The unreaped harvest of unfurrowed fields, 261  
And bakes its unadulterated loaves

Without a furnace in unpurchased groves,  
 And flings off famine from its fertile breast,  
 A priceless market for the gathering guest ;—  
 These, with the luxuries of seas and woods,  
 The airy joys of social solitudes,  
 Tamed each rude wanderer to the sympathies  
 Of those who were more happy, if less wise,  
 Did more than Europe's discipline had done,  
 And civilised Civilisation's son !

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## XII.

Of these, and there was many a willing pair,  
 Neuha<sup>1</sup> and Torquil were not the least fair :  
 Both children of the isles, though distant far ;  
 Both born beneath a sea-presiding star ;  
 Both nourished amidst Nature's native scenes,  
 Loved to the last, whatever intervenes  
 Between us and our Childhood's sympathy,  
 Which still reverts to what first caught the eye.  
 He who first met the Highlands' swelling blue  
 Will love each peak that shows a kindred hue,  
 Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,  
 And clasp the mountain in his Mind's embrace.  
 Long have I roamed through lands which are not mine,  
 Adored the Alp, and loved the Apennine,  
 Revered Parnassus, and beheld the steep  
 Jove's Ida and Olympus crown the deep :  
 But 'twas not all long ages' lore, nor all  
 Their nature held me in their thrilling thrall ;  
 The infant rapture still survived the boy,  
 And Loch-na-gar with Ida looked o'er Troy,<sup>2</sup>

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1. [Toobo Neuha is the name of a Tongan chieftain. See *Mariner's Account, etc.*, 1817, 141, *sq.*]

2. When very young, about eight years of age, after an attack of the scarlet fever at Aberdeen, I was removed by medical advice into the Highlands. Here I passed occasionally some summers, and from this period I date my love of mountainous countries. I can never forget the effect, a few years afterwards, in England, of the only thing I had long seen, even in miniature, of a mountain, in the Malvern Hills. After I returned to Cheltenham, I used to watch them every afternoon, at sunset, with a sensation which I cannot describe. This was boyish enough : but I was then only thirteen years of age, and it was in the

Mixed Celtic memories with the Phrygian mount,  
 And Highland linns with Castalie's clear fount.  
 Forgive me, Homer's universal shade !  
 Forgive me, Phœbus ! that my fancy strayed ;  
 The North and Nature taught me to adore  
 Your scenes sublime, from those beloved before.

## XIII.

The love which maketh all things fond and fair,  
 The youth which makes one rainbow of the air,  
 The dangers past, that make even Man enjoy 300  
 The pause in which he ceases to destroy,  
 The mutual beauty, which the sternest feel  
 Strike to their hearts like lightning to the steel,  
 United the half savage and the whole,  
 The maid and boy, in one absorbing soul.  
 No more the thundering memory of the fight  
 Wrapped his weaned bosom in its dark delight ;  
 No more the irksome restlessness of Rest  
 Disturbed him like the eagle in her nest,  
 Whose whetted beak <sup>1</sup> and far-pervading eye 310  
 Darts for a victim over all the sky :  
 His heart was tamed to that voluptuous state,  
 At once Elysian and effeminate,  
 Which leaves no laurels o'er the Hero's urn ;—  
 These wither when for aught save blood they burn ;  
 Yet when their ashes in their nook are laid,  
 Doth not the myrtle leave as sweet a shade ?  
 Had Cæsar known but Cleopatra's kiss,  
 Rome had been free, the world had not been his.  
 And what have Cæsar's deeds and Cæsar's fame 320  
 Done for the earth ? We feel them in our shame.  
 The gory sanction of his Glory stains  
 The rust which tyrants cherish on our chains.  
 Though Glory—Nature—Reason—Freedom, bid

holidays. [Byron spent his summer holidays, 1796-98, at the farmhouse of Ballatrich, on Deeside. (See *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 192, note 2. For his visit to Cheltenham, in the summer of 1801, see *Life*, pp. 8, 19.)]

1. [For the eagle's beak, see *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza xviii. line 6, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 226, note 1.]

Roused millions do what single Brutus did—  
 Sweep these mere mock-birds of the Despot's song  
 From the tall bough where they have perched so long,—  
 Still are we hawked at by such mousing owls,<sup>1</sup>  
 And take for falcons those ignoble fowls,  
 When but a word of freedom would dispel  
 These bugbears, as their terrors show too well. 330

## XIV.

Rapt in the fond forgetfulness of life,  
 Neuha, the South Sea girl, was all a wife,  
 With no distracting world to call her off  
 From Love; with no Society to scoff  
 At the new transient flame; no babbling crowd  
 Of coxcombry in admiration loud,  
 Or with adulterous whisper to alloy  
 Her duty, and her glory, and her joy:  
 With faith and feelings naked as her form, 340  
 She stood as stands a rainbow in a storm,  
 Changing its hues with bright variety,  
 But still expanding lovelier o'er the sky,  
 Howe'er its arch may swell, its colours move,  
 The cloud-compelling harbinger of Love.

## XV.

Here, in this grotto of the wave-worn shore,  
 They passed the Tropic's red meridian o'er;  
 Nor long the hours—they never paused o'er time,  
 Unbroken by the clock's funereal chime,<sup>2</sup>  
 Which deals the daily pittance of our span, 350  
 And points and mocks with iron laugh at man.<sup>1</sup>  
 What deemed they of the future or the past?  
 The present, like a tyrant, held them fast:  
 Their hour-glass was the sea-sand, and the tide,  
 Like her smooth billow, saw their moments glide;

i. *Which knolls the knell of moments out of man.*—[MS. D. erased.]

i. [Compare *Macbeth*, act ii. sc. 4, line 13.]

2. [Compare—

“The never-merry clock.”

*U'erner*, act iii. sc. 3, line 3.]

Their clock the Sun, in his unbounded tower ;  
 They reckoned not, whose day was but an hour ;  
 The nightingale, their only vesper-bell,  
 Sung sweetly to the rose the day's farewell ;<sup>1</sup>  
 The broad Sun set, but not with lingering sweep, 360  
 As in the North he mellows o'er the deep ;  
 But fiery, full, and fierce, as if he left  
 The World for ever, earth of light bereft,  
 Plunged with red forehead down along the wave,  
 As dives a hero headlong to his grave.  
 Then rose they, looking first along the skies,  
 And then for light into each other's eyes,  
 Wondering that Summer showed so brief a sun,  
 And asking if indeed the day were done.

## XVI.

And let not this seem strange : the devotee 370  
 Lives not in earth, but in his ecstasy ;  
 Around him days and worlds are heedless driven,  
 His Soul is gone before his dust to Heaven.  
 Is Love less potent ? No—his path is trod,  
 Alike uplifted gloriously to God ;  
 Or linked to all we know of Heaven below,  
 The other better self, whose joy or woe  
 Is more than ours ; the all-absorbing flame  
 Which, kindled by another, grows the same,<sup>1</sup>  
 Wrapt in one blaze ; the pure, yet funeral pile, 380  
 Where gentle hearts, like Bramins, sit and smile.  
 How often we forget all time, when lone,  
 Admiring Nature's universal throne,  
 Her woods—her wilds—her waters—the intense  
 Reply of *hers* to our intelligence !  
 Live not the Stars and Mountains ? Are the Waves  
 Without a spirit ? Are the dropping caves  
 Without a feeling in their silent tears ?<sup>2</sup>

i. *Which kindled by another's* —.—[*MS. D.*]

1. The now well-known story of the loves of the nightingale and rose need not be more than alluded to, being sufficiently familiar to the Western as to the Eastern reader. [Compare *Werner*, act iv. sc. 1, lines 380–382 ; and *The Giaour*, lines 21, 33.]

2. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanzas lxxvii., lxxv. Once

No, no ;—they woo and clasp us to their spheres,  
 Dissolve this clog and clod of clay before 390  
 Its hour, and merge our soul in the great shore.  
 Strip off this fond and false identity !—  
 Who thinks of self when gazing on the sky ?  
 And who, though gazing lower, ever thought,  
 In the young moments ere the heart is taught  
 Time's lesson, of Man's baseness or his own ?  
 All Nature is his realm, and Love his throne.

## XVII.

Neuha arose, and Torquil : Twilight's hour  
 Came sad and softly to their rocky bower,  
 Which, kindling by degrees its dewy spars, 400  
 Echoed their dim light to the mustering stars.  
 Slowly the pair, partaking Nature's calm,  
 Sought out their cottage, built beneath the palm ;  
 Now smiling and now silent, as the scene ;  
 Lovely as Love—the Spirit !—when serene.  
 The Ocean scarce spoke louder with his swell,  
 Than breathes his mimic murmurer in the shell,<sup>1</sup>

again the language and the sentiment recall Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*. (See *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 261, note 2.)]

1. If the reader will apply to his ear the sea-shell on his chimney-piece, he will be aware of what is alluded to. If the text should appear obscure, he will find in *Gebir* the same idea better expressed in two lines. The poem I never read, but have heard the lines quoted, by a more recondite reader—who seems to be of a different opinion from the editor of the *Quarterly Review*, who qualified it in his answer to the Critical Reviewer of his *Juvenal*, as trash of the worst and most insane description. It is to Mr. Landor, the author of *Gebir*, so qualified, and of some Latin poems, which vie with Martial or Catullus in obscenity, that the immaculate Mr. Southey addresses his declamation against impurity !

[These are the lines in *Gebir* to which Byron alludes—

“ But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue.

Shake one and it awakens ; then apply  
 Its polish'd lips to your attentive ear,  
 And it remembers its august abodes,  
 And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.

Compare, too, *The Excursion*, bk. iv.—

“ I have seen  
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell.



As, far divided from his parent deep,  
 The sea-born infant cries, and will not sleep,  
 Raising his little plaint in vain, to rave 410  
 For the broad bosom of his nursing wave :  
 The woods drooped darkly, as inclined to rest,  
 The tropic bird wheeled rockward to his nest,  
 And the blue sky spread round them like a lake  
 Of peace, where Piety her thirst might slake.

## XVIII.

But through the palm and plantain, hark, a Voice !  
 Not such as would have been a lover's choice,  
 In such an hour, to break the air so still ;  
 No dying night-breeze, harping o'er the hill,  
 Striking the strings of nature, rock and tree, 420  
 Those best and earliest lyres of Harmony,  
 With Echo for their chorus ; nor the alarm  
 Of the loud war-whoop to dispel the charm ;  
 Nor the soliloquy of the hermit owl,  
 Exhaling all his solitary soul,  
 The dim though large-eyed wingéd anchorite,  
 Who peals his dreary Pæan o'er the night ;  
 But a loud, long, and naval whistle, shrill  
 As ever started through a sea-bird's bill ;  
 And then a pause, and then a hoarse "Hillo ! 430  
 Torquil, my boy ! what cheer ? Ho ! brother, ho !"  
 "Who hails ?" cried Torquil, following with his eye  
 The sound. "Here's one," was all the brief reply.

To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
 Listened intently," etc.

Landor, in his *Satire upon Satirists*, 1836, p. 29, commenting on Wordsworth's alleged remark that he "would not give five shillings for all the poetry that Southey had written" (see *Letters*, 1900, iv. Appendix IX. pp. 483, 484), calls attention to this unacknowledged borrowing. "It would have been honester," he says, "and more decorous if the writer of the following verses had mentioned from what bar he drew his wire." According to H. C. Robinson (*Diary*, 1869, iii. 114), Wordsworth acknowledged no obligation to Landor's *Gebir* for the image of the sea-shell. "From his childhood the shell was familiar to him, etc. The 'Satire' seemed to give Wordsworth little annoyance."]

## XIX.

But here the herald of the self-same mouth<sup>1</sup>  
 Came breathing o'er the aromatic south,  
 Not like a "bed of violets" on the gale,  
 But such as wafts its cloud o'er grog or ale,  
 Borne from a short frail pipe, which yet had blown  
 Its gentle odours over either zone,  
 And, puffed where'er winds rise or waters roll, 440  
 Had wafted smoke from Portsmouth to the Pole,  
 Opposed its vapour as the lightning flashed,  
 And reeked, 'midst mountain-billows, unabashed,  
 To Æolus a constant sacrifice,  
 Through every change of all the varying skies.  
 And what was he who bore it?—I may err,  
 But deem him sailor or philosopher.<sup>2</sup>  
 Sublime Tobacco! which from East to West  
 Cheers the tar's labour or the Turkman's rest;  
 Which on the Moslem's ottoman divides 450  
 His hours, and rivals opium and his brides;  
 Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,  
 Though not less loved, in Wapping or the Strand;  
 Divine in hookas, glorious in a pipe,  
 When tipped with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe;  
 Like other charmers, wooing the caress,  
 More dazzlingly when daring in full dress;  
 Yet thy true lovers more admire by far<sup>1</sup>  
 Thy naked beauties—Give me a cigar!<sup>3</sup>

i. *Yet they who love thee best prefer by far.*—[MS. D. erased.]

1. [In his Preface to Cantos I., II. of *Childe Harold* (*Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 5), Byron relies on the authority of "Ariosto Thomson and Beattie" for the inclusion of droll or satirical "variations" in a serious poem. Nevertheless, Dallas prevailed on him to omit certain "ludicrous stanzas." It is to be regretted that no one suggested the excision of sections xix.-xxi. from the second canto of *The Island*.]

2. Hobbes, the father of Locke's and other philosophy, was an inveterate smoker,—even to pipes beyond computation.  
 ["Soon after dinner he [Hobbes] retired to his study, and had his candle, with ten or twelve pipes of tobacco laid by him; then, shutting his door, he fell to smoking, and thinking, and writing for several hours."—*Memoirs of the Family of Cavendish*, by White Kennet, D.D., 1708, pp. 14, 15.]

3. ["I shall now smoke two cigars, and get me to bed. . . . The Havannah are the best;—but neither are so pleasant as a hooka or chibogue."—*Journal*, December 6, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 368.]

## XX.

Through the approaching darkness of the wood      460  
 A human figure broke the solitude,  
 Fantastically, it may be, arrayed,  
 A seaman in a savage masquerade ;  
 Such as appears to rise out from the deep,  
 When o'er the line the merry vessels sweep,  
 And the rough Saturnalia of the tar  
 Flock o'er the deck, in Neptune's borrowed car ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And, pleased, the God of Ocean sees his name  
 Revive once more, though but in mimic game  
 Of his true sons, who riot in the breeze      470  
 Undreamt of in his native Cyclades.  
 Still the old God delights, from out the main,  
 To snatch some glimpses of his ancient reign.  
 Our sailor's jacket, though in ragged trim,  
 His constant pipe, which never yet burned dim,  
 His foremast air, and somewhat rolling gait,  
 Like his dear vessel, spoke his former state ;  
 But then a sort of kerchief round his head,  
 Not over tightly bound, nor nicely spread ;  
 And, 'stead of trowsers (ah ! too early torn !      480  
 For even the mildest woods will have their thorn)  
 A curious sort of somewhat scanty mat  
 Now served for inexpressibles and hat ;  
 His naked feet and neck, and sunburnt face,  
 Perchance might suit alike with either race.  
 His arms were all his own, our Europe's growth,  
 Which two worlds bless for civilising both ;  
 The musket swung behind his shoulders broad,  
 And somewhat stooped by his marine abode,  
 But brawny as the boar's ; and hung beneath,      490  
 His cutlass drooped, unconscious of a sheath,  
 Or lost or worn away ; his pistols were  
 Linked to his belt, a matrimonial pair—  
 (Let not this metaphor appear a scoff,  
 Though one missed fire, the other would go off) ;  
 These, with a bayonet, not so free from rust

1. This rough but jovial ceremony, used in crossing the line, has been so often and so well described, that it need not be more than alluded to.

As when the arm-chest held its brighter trust,  
Completed his accoutrements, as Night  
Surveyed him in his garb heteroclite.

## XXI.

"What cheer, Ben Bunting?" cried (when in full view  
Our new acquaintance) Torquil. "Aught of new?" 501  
"Ey, ey!" quoth Ben, "not new, but news enow;  
A strange sail in the offing."—"Sail! and how?  
What! could you make her out? It cannot be;  
I've seen no rag of canvass on the sea."  
"Belike," said Ben, "you might not from the bay,  
But from the bluff-head, where I watched to-day,  
I saw her in the doldrums; for the wind  
Was light and baffling."—"When the Sun declined  
Where lay she? had she anchored?"—"No, but still 510  
She bore down on us, till the wind grew still."  
"Her flag?"—"I had no glass: but fore and aft,  
Egad! she seemed a wicked-looking craft."  
"Armed?"—"I expect so;—sent on the look-out:  
'Tis time, belike, to put our helm about."  
"About?—Whate'er may have us now in chase,  
We'll make no running fight, for that were base;  
We will die at our quarters, like true men."  
"Ey, ey! for that 'tis all the same to Ben."  
"Does Christian know this?"—"Aye; he has piped all  
hands 520  
To quarters. They are furbishing the stands  
Of arms; and we have got some guns to bear,  
And scaled them. You are wanted."—"That's but fair;  
And if it were not, mine is not the soul  
To leave my comrades helpless on the shoal.  
My Neuha! ah! and must my fate pursue  
Not me alone, but one so sweet and true?  
But whatsoe'er betide, ah, Neuha! now  
Unman me not: the hour will not allow  
A tear; I am thine whatever intervenes!" 530  
"Right," quoth Ben; "that will do for the marines."<sup>1</sup>

1. "That will do for the marines, but the sailors won't believe it," is an old saying: and one of the few fragments of former jealousies which still survive (in jest only) between these gallant services.

## CANTO THE THIRD.



## I.

THE fight was o'er ; the flashing through the gloom,  
Which robes the cannon as he wings a tomb,  
Had ceased ; and sulphury vapours upward driven  
Had left the Earth, and but polluted Heaven :  
The rattling roar which rung in every volley  
Had left the echoes to their melancholy ;  
No more they shrieked their horror, boom for boom ;  
The strife was done, the vanquished had their doom ;  
The mutineers were crushed, dispersed, or ta'en,  
Or lived to deem the happiest were the slain. 10  
Few, few escaped, and these were hunted o'er  
The isle they loved beyond their native shore.  
No further home was theirs, it seemed, on earth,  
Once renegades to that which gave them birth ;  
Tracked like wild beasts, like them they sought the wild,  
As to a Mother's bosom flies the child ;  
But vainly wolves and lions seek their den,  
And still more vainly men escape from men.

## II.

Beneath a rock whose jutting base protrudes  
Far over Ocean in its fiercest moods, 20  
When scaling his enormous crag the wave  
Is hurled down headlong, like the foremost brave,  
And falls back on the foaming crowd behind,  
Which fight beneath the banners of the wind,  
But now at rest, a little remnant drew

Together, bleeding, thirsty, faint, and few ;  
But still their weapons in their hands, and still  
With something of the pride of former will,  
As men not all unused to meditate,  
And strive much more than wonder at their fate. 30  
Their present lot was what they had foreseen,  
And dared as what was likely to have been ;  
Yet still the lingering hope, which deemed their lot  
Not pardoned, but unsought for or forgot,  
Or trusted that, if sought, their distant caves  
Might still be missed amidst the world of waves,  
Had weaned their thoughts in part from what they saw  
And felt, the vengeance of their country's law.  
Their sea-green isle, their guilt-won Paradise,  
No more could shield their Virtue or their Vice : 40  
Their better feelings, if such were, were thrown  
Back on themselves,—their sins remained alone.  
Proscribed even in their second country, they  
Were lost ; in vain the World before them lay ;  
All outlets seemed secured. Their new allies  
Had fought and bled in mutual sacrifice ;  
But what availed the club and spear, and arm  
Of Hercules, against the sulphury charm,  
The magic of the thunder, which destroyed  
The warrior ere his strength could be employed ? 50  
Dug, like a spreading pestilence, the grave  
No less of human bravery than the brave !<sup>1</sup>  
Their own scant numbers acted all the few  
Against the many oft will dare and do ;  
But though the choice seems native to die free,  
Even Greece can boast but one Thermopylæ,  
Till *now*, when she has forged her broken chain  
Back to a sword, and dies and lives again !

1. Archidamus, King of Sparta, and son of Agesilaus, when he saw a machine invented for the casting of stones and darts, exclaimed that it was the "grave of valour." The same story has been told of some knights on the first application of gunpowder ; but the original anecdote is in Plutarch. [The Greek is "Ἀπώλεν, ἀνδρὸς ἀρετά." Plutarch's *Scripta Moralia*, 1839, i. 230.]

## III.

Beside the jutting rock the few appeared,  
Like the last remnant of the red-deer's herd ; 60  
Their eyes were feverish, and their aspect worn,  
But still the hunter's blood was on their horn.  
A little stream came tumbling from the height,  
And straggling into ocean as it might,  
Its bounding crystal frolicked in the ray,  
And gushed from cliff to crag with saltless spray ;  
Close on the wild, wide ocean, yet as pure  
And fresh as Innocence, and more secure,  
Its silver torrent glittered o'er the deep,  
As the shy chamois' eye o'erlooks the steep, 70  
While far below the vast and sullen swell  
Of Ocean's alpine azure rose and fell.  
To this young spring they rushed,—all feelings first  
Absorbed in Passion's and in Nature's thirst,—  
Drank as they do who drink their last, and threw  
Their arms aside to revel in its dew ;  
Cooled their scorched throats, and washed the gory stains  
From wounds whose only bandage might be chains ;  
Then, when their drought was quenched, looked sadly  
    round,  
As wondering how so many still were found 80  
Alive and fetterless :—but silent all,  
Each sought his fellow's eyes, as if to call  
On him for language which his lips denied,  
As though their voices with their cause had died.

## IV.

Stern, and aloof a little from the rest,  
Stood Christian, with his arms across his chest.  
The ruddy, reckless, dauntless hue once spread  
Along his cheek was livid now as lead ;  
His light-brown locks, so graceful in their flow,  
Now rose like startled vipers o'er his brow. 90  
Still as a statue, with his lips comprest  
To stifle even the breath within his breast,  
Fast by the rock, all menacing, but mute,  
He stood ; and, save a slight beat of his foot,

Which deepened now and then the sandy dint  
Beneath his heel, his form seemed turned to flint.  
Some paces further Torquil leaned his head  
Against a bank, and spoke not, but he bled,—  
Not mortally :—his worst wound was within ;  
His brow was pale, his blue eyes sunken in, 100  
And blood-drops, sprinkled o'er his yellow hair,  
Showed that his faintness came not from despair,  
But Nature's ebb. Beside him was another,  
Rough as a bear, but willing as a brother,—  
Ben Bunting, who essayed to wash, and wipe,  
And bind his wound—then calmly lit his pipe,  
A trophy which survived a hundred fights,  
A beacon which had cheered ten thousand nights.  
The fourth and last of this deserted group  
Walked up and down—at times would stand, then stoop  
To pick a pebble up—then let it drop— 111  
Then hurry as in haste—then quickly stop—  
Then cast his eyes on his companions—then  
Half whistle half a tune, and pause again—  
And then his former movements would redouble,  
With something between carelessness and trouble.  
This is a long description, but applies  
To scarce five minutes passed before the eyes ;  
But yet *what* minutes ! Moments like to these  
Rend men's lives into immortalities. 120

## V.

At length Jack Skyscape, a mercurial man,  
Who fluttered over all things like a fan,  
More brave than firm, and more disposed to dare  
And die at once than wrestle with despair,  
Exclaimed, "G—d damn !"—those syllables intense,—  
Nucleus of England's native eloquence,  
As the Turk's "Allah !" or the Roman's more  
Pagan "Proh Jupiter !" was wont of yore  
To give their first impressions such a vent,  
By way of echo to embarrassment.<sup>4</sup> 130  
Jack was embarrassed,—never hero more,

i. *To peep in a small embarrassment.*—[MS. D. erased.]



And as he knew not what to say, he swore :  
 Nor swore in vain ; the long congenial sound  
 Revived Ben Bunting from his pipe profound ;  
 He drew it from his mouth, and looked full wise,  
 But merely added to the oath his *eyes* ;  
 Thus rendering the imperfect phrase complete,  
 A peroration I need not repeat.

## VI.

But Christian,<sup>1</sup> of a higher order, stood  
 Like an extinct volcano in his mood ;

140

1. [Fletcher Christian, born 1763, was the fourth son of Charles Christian, an attorney, of Moreland Close, in the parish of Brigham, Cumberland. His family, which was of Manx extraction, was connected with the Christians of Ewanrigg, and the Curwens of Workington Hall. His brother Edward became Chief Justice of Ely, and was well known as the editor of *Blackstone's Commentaries*. For purposes of verification (see *An Answer to certain Assertions, etc.*, 1794, p. 9), Bligh described him as "aged 24 years, five feet nine inches high, blackish or very dark brown complexioned, dark brown hair, strong made, star tatowed on the left breast," etc. According to "Morrison's Journal," high words had passed between Bligh and Christian on more than one occasion, and, on the day before the mutiny, a question having arisen with regard to the disappearance of some cocoa-nuts, Christian was cross-examined by the captain as to his share of the plunder. "I really do not know, sir," he replied ; "but I hope you do not think me so mean as to be guilty of stealing yours." "Yes," said Bligh, "you — hound, I do think so, or you could have given a better account of them." It was after this offensive accusation that Christian determined, in the first instance, to quit the ship, and on the morning of April 28, 1788, finding the mate of the watch asleep, on the spur of the moment resolved to lay violent hands on the captain, and assume the command of the *Bounty*. The language attributed to Bligh reads like a translation into the vernacular, but if Christian kept his designs to himself, it is strange that they were immediately understood and acted upon by a body of impromptu conspirators. Testimony, whether written or spoken, with regard to the succession of events "in moments like to these," is worth very little ; but it is pretty evident that Christian was a gentleman, and that Bligh's violent and unmannerly ratings were the immediate cause of the mutiny.

Contradictory accounts are given of Christian's death. It is generally believed that in the fourth year of the settlement on Pitcairn Island the Tahitians formed a plot to massacre the Englishmen, and that Christian was shot when at work in his plantation (*The Mutineers, etc.*, by Lady Belcher, 1870, p. 163, *The Mutiny, etc.*, by Rosalind A. Young, 1894, p. 28). On the other hand, Amasa Delano, in his *Narrative of Voyages, etc.* (Boston, 1817, cap. v. p. 140), asserts that Captain Mayhew Folger, who was the first to visit the island in 1808, "was very explicit in his inquiry at the time, as well as in his account of it to me, that they lived under Christian's government several years

Silent, and sad, and savage,—with the trace  
Of passion reeking from his clouded face ;  
Till lifting up again his sombre eye,  
It glanced on Torquil, who leaned faintly by.  
“And is it thus ?” he cried, “unhappy boy !  
And thee, too, *thee*—my madness must destroy !”  
He said, and strode to where young Torquil stood,  
Yet dabbled with his lately flowing blood ;  
Seized his hand wistfully, but did not press,  
And shrunk as fearful of his own caress ; 150  
Enquired into his state : and when he heard  
The wound was slighter than he deemed or feared,  
A moment’s brightness passed along his brow,  
As much as such a moment would allow.  
“Yes,” he exclaimed, “we are taken in the toil,  
But not a coward or a common spoil ;  
Dearly they have bought us—dearly still may buy,—  
And I must fall ; but have *you* strength to fly ?  
’Twould be some comfort still, could you survive ;  
Our dwindled band is now too few to strive. 160  
Oh ! for a sole canoe ! though but a shell,  
To bear you hence to where a hope may dwell !  
For me, my lot is what I sought ; to be,  
In life or death, the fearless and the free.”

## VII.

Even as he spoke, around the promontory,  
Which nodded o’er the billows high and hoary,  
A dark speck dotted Ocean : on it flew  
Like to the shadow of a roused sea-mew ;  
Onward it came—and, lo ! a second followed—  
Now seen—now hid—where Ocean’s vale was hollowed ;  
And near, and nearer, till the dusky crew 171  
Presented well-known aspects to the view,

after they landed ; that during the whole time they enjoyed tolerable harmony ; that Christian became sick, and died a natural death.” It stands to reason that the ex-puante, Alexander Smith, who had developed into John Adams, the pious founder of a patriarchal colony, would be anxious to draw a veil over the early years of the settlement, and would satisfy the curiosity of visitors who were officers of the Royal Navy, as best he could, and as the spirit moved him.]

Till on the surf their skimming paddles play,  
Buoyant as wings, and flitting through the spray ;—  
Now perching on the wave's high curl, and now  
Dashed downward in the thundering foam below,  
Which flings it broad and boiling sheet on sheet,  
And slings its high flakes, shivered into sleet :  
But floating still through surf and swell, drew nigh  
The barks, like small birds through a lowering sky. 180  
Their art seemed nature—such the skill to sweep  
The wave of these born playmates of the deep.

## VIII.

And who the first that, springing on the strand,  
Leaped like a Nereid from her shell to land,  
With dark but brilliant skin, and dewy eye  
Shining with love, and hope, and constancy ?  
Neuha—the fond, the faithful, the adored—  
Her heart on Torquil's like a torrent poured ;  
And smiled, and wept, and near, and nearer clasped,  
As if to be assured 'twas *him* she grasped ; 190  
Shuddered to see his yet warm wound, and then,  
To find it trivial, smiled and wept again.  
She was a warrior's daughter, and could bear  
Such sights, and feel, and mourn, but not despair.  
Her lover lived,—nor foes nor fears could blight  
That full-blown moment in its all delight :  
Joy trickled in her tears, joy filled the sob  
That rocked her heart till almost HEARD to throb ;  
And Paradise was breathing in the sigh  
Of Nature's child in Nature's ecstasy. 200

## IX.

The sterner spirits who beheld that meeting  
Were not unmoved ; who are, when hearts are greeting ?  
Even Christian gazed upon the maid and boy  
With tearless eye, but yet a gloomy joy  
Mixed with those bitter thoughts the soul arrays  
In hopeless visions of our better days,  
When all 's gone—to the rainbow's latest ray.  
“ And but for me ! ” he said, and turned away ;

Then gazed upon the pair, as in his den  
A lion looks upon his cubs again ; 210  
And then relapsed into his sullen guise,  
As heedless of his further destinies.

## X.

But brief their time for good or evil thought ;  
The billows round the promontory brought  
The splash of hostile oars.—Alas ! who made  
That sound a dread ? All around them seemed arrayed  
Against them, save the bride of Toobonai :  
She, as she caught the first glimpse o'er the bay  
Of the armed boats, which hurried to complete  
The remnant's ruin with their flying feet,<sup>1</sup> 220  
Beckoned the natives round her to their prows,  
Embarked their guests and launched their light canoes ;  
In one placed Christian and his comrades twain—  
But she and Torquil must not part again.  
She fixed him in her own.—Away ! away !  
They cleared the breakers, dart along the bay,  
And towards a group of islets, such as bear  
The sea-bird's nest and seal's surf-hollowed lair,  
They skim the blue tops of the billows ; fast  
They flew, and fast their fierce pursuers chased. 230  
They gain upon them—now they lose again,—  
Again make way and menace o'er the main ;  
And now the two canoes in chase divide,  
And follow different courses o'er the tide,  
To baffle the pursuit.—Away ! away !  
As Life is on each paddle's flight to-day,  
And more than Life or lives to Neuha : Love  
Freights the frail bark and urges to the cove ;  
And now the refuge and the foe are nigh—  
Yet, yet a moment ! Fly, thou light ark, fly ! 240

i. *The ruined remnant of the land's defeat.*—[MS. D. erased.]

## CANTO THE FOURTH.

## I.

WHITE as a white sail on a dusky sea,  
When half the horizon 's clouded and half free,  
Fluttering between the dun wave and the sky,  
Is Hope's last gleam in Man's extremity.  
Her anchor parts ; but still her snowy sail  
Attracts our eye amidst the rudest gale :  
Though every wave she climbs divides us more,  
The heart still follows from the loneliest shore.

## II.

Not distant from the isle of Toobonai,  
A black rock rears its bosom o'er the spray, 10  
The haunt of birds, a desert to mankind,  
Where the rough seal reposes from the wind,  
And sleeps unwieldy in his cavern dun,  
Or gambols with huge frolic in the sun :  
There shrilly to the passing oar is heard  
The startled echo of the Ocean bird,  
Who rears on its bare breast her callow brood,  
The feathered fishers of the solitude.  
A narrow segment of the yellow sand  
On one side forms the outline of a strand ;<sup>1</sup> 20  
Here the young turtle, crawling from his shell,  
Steals to the deep wherein his parents dwell ;  
Chipped by the beam, a nursling of the day,  
But hatched for ocean by the fostering ray ;

1. [Compare *The Siege of Corinth*, lines 438, 439, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 467.]

The rest was one bleak precipice, as e'er  
Gave mariners a shelter and despair;  
A spot to make the saved regret the deck  
Which late went down, and envy the lost wreck.  
Such was the stern asylum Neuha chose  
To shield her lover from his following foes ; 30  
But all its secret was not told ; she knew  
In this a treasure hidden from the view.

## III.

Ere the canoes divided, near the spot,  
The men that manned what held her Torquil's lot,  
By her command removed, to strengthen more  
The skiff which wafted Christian from the shore.  
This he would have opposed ; but with a smile  
She pointed calmly to the craggy isle,  
And bade him "speed and prosper." *She* would take  
The rest upon herself for Torquil's sake. 40  
They parted with this added aid ; afar,  
The Proa darted like a shooting star,  
And gained on the pursuers, who now steered  
Right on the rock which she and Torquil neared.  
They pulled ; her arm, though delicate, was free  
And firm as ever grappled with the sea,  
And yielded scarce to Torquil's manlier strength.  
The prow now almost lay within its length  
Of the crag's steep inexorable face,  
With nought but soundless waters for its base ; 50  
Within a hundred boats' length was the foe,  
And now what refuge but their frail canoe ?  
This Torquil asked with half upbraiding eye,  
Which said—"Has Neuha brought me here to die ?  
Is this a place of safety, or a grave,  
And yon huge rock the tombstone of the wave ?"

## IV.

They rested on their paddles, and uprose  
Neuha, and pointing to the approaching foes,  
Cried, "Torquil, follow me, and fearless follow !"  
Then plunged at once into the Ocean's hollow. 60

There was no time to pause—the foes were near—  
Chains in his eye, and menace in his ear;  
With vigour they pulled on, and as they came,  
Hailed him to yield, and by his forfeit name.  
Headlong he leapt—to him the swimmer's skill  
Was native, and now all his hope from ill:  
But how, or where? He dived, and rose no more;  
The boat's crew looked amazed o'er sea and shore.  
There was no landing on that precipice,  
Steep, harsh, and slippery as a berg of ice. 70  
They watched awhile to see him float again,  
But not a trace rebubbled from the main:  
The wave rolled on, no ripple on its face,  
Since their first plunge recalled a single trace;  
The little whirl which eddied, and slight foam,  
That whitened o'er what seemed their latest home,  
White as a sepulchre above the pair  
Who left no marble (mournful as an heir)  
The quiet Proa wavering o'er the tide  
Was all that told of Torquil and his bride; 80  
And but for this alone the whole might seem  
The vanished phantom of a seaman's dream.  
They paused and searched in vain, then pulled away;  
Even Superstition now forbade their stay.  
Some said he had not plunged into the wave,  
But vanished like a corpse-light from a grave;  
Others, that something supernatural  
Glared in his figure, more than mortal tall;  
While all agreed that in his cheek and eye  
There was a dead hue of Eternity. 90  
Still as their oars receded from the crag,  
Round every weed a moment would they lag,  
Expectant of some token of their prey;  
But no—he had melted from them like the spray.

## V.

And where was he the Pilgrim of the Deep,  
Following the Nereid? Had they ceased to weep  
For ever? or, received in coral caves,  
Wrung life and pity from the softening waves?

Did they with Ocean's hidden sovereigns dwell,  
And sound with Mermen the fantastic shell? 100  
Did Neuha with the mermaids comb her hair  
Flowing o'er ocean as it streamed in air?  
Or had they perished, and in silence slept  
Beneath the gulf wherein they boldly leapt?

## VI.

Young Neuha plunged into the deep, and he  
Followed : her track beneath her native sea  
Was as a native's of the element,  
So smoothly—bravely—brilliantly she went,  
Leaving a streak of light behind her heel,  
Which struck and flashed like an amphibious steel. 110  
Closely, and scarcely less expert to trace  
The depths where divers hold the pearl in chase,  
Torquil, the nursling of the northern seas,  
Pursued her liquid steps with heart and ease.  
Deep—deeper for an instant Neuha led  
The way—then upward soared—and as she spread  
Her arms, and flung the foam from off her locks,  
Laughed, and the sound was answered by the rocks.  
They had gained a central realm of earth again,  
But looked for tree, and field, and sky, in vain. 120  
Around she pointed to a spacious cave,  
Whose only portal was the keyless wave,<sup>1</sup>

1. Of this cave (which is no fiction) the original will be found in the ninth chapter of "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands" [1817, i. 267-279]. I have taken the poetical liberty to transplant it to Toobonai, the last island where any distinct account is left of Christian and his comrades.

[The following is the account given by Mariner: "On this island [Hoonga] there is a peculiar cavern, which was first discovered by a young chief, whilst diving after a turtle. The nature of this cavern will be better understood if we imagine a hollow rock rising sixty feet or more above the surface of the water, into the cavity of which there is no known entrance but one, and that is on the side of the rock, as low down as six feet under the water, into which it flows; and, consequently, the base of the cavern may be said to be the sea itself." Mariner seeing some young chiefs diving into the water one after another, and not rise again, he inquired of the last, . . . what they were about? "'Follow me,'" said he, "'and I will take you where you have never been before. . . .'" Mariner prepared to follow his companion, and, guided by the light reflected from his heels, entered the



(A hollow archway by the sun unseen,  
Save through the billows' glassy veil of green,  
In some transparent ocean holiday,  
When all the finny people are at play,  
Wiped with her hair the brine from Torquil's eyes,  
And clapped her hands with joy at his surprise ;  
Led him to where the rock appeared to jut,  
And form a something like a Triton's hut ;                   130  
For all was darkness for a space, till day,  
Through clefts above let in a sobered ray ;  
As in some old cathedral's glimmering aisle  
The dusty monuments from light recoil,  
Thus sadly in their refuge submarine  
The vault drew half her shadow from the scene.

opening in the rock, and rose into the cavern. The light was sufficient, after remaining about five minutes, to show objects with some little distinctness ; . . . Nevertheless, as it was desirable to have a stronger light, Mariner dived out again, and, priming his pistol, tied plenty of gnatoo tight round it, and wrapped the whole up in a plantain-leaf : he directed an attendant to bring a torch in the same way. Thus prepared, he re-entered the cavern, unwrapped the gnatoo, fired it by the flash of the powder, and lighted the torch. "The place was now illuminated tolerably well. . . . It appeared (by guess) to be about forty feet wide in the main part, but it branched off, on one side, in two narrower portions. The medium height seemed also about forty feet. The roof was hung with stalactites in a very curious way, resembling, upon a cursory view, the Gothic arches and ornaments of an old church." According to one of the matabooles present, the entire family of a certain chief had, in former times, been condemned to death for conspiring against a rival tyrant—the chief to be taken out to sea and drowned, the rest of the family to be massacred. One of the chief's daughters was a beautiful girl, to whom the youth who discovered the cave was attached. "He had long been enamoured of this young maiden, but had never dared to make her acquainted with the soft emotions of his heart, knowing that she was betrothed to a chief of higher rank and greater power, but now, . . . no time was to be lost ; he flew to her abode . . . declared himself her deliverer if she would trust to his honour. . . . Soon her consenting hand was clasped in his : the shades of evening favoured their escape . . . till her lover had brought a small canoe to a lonely part of the beach. In this they speedily embarked. . . . They soon arrived at the rock, he leaped into the water, and she, instructed by him, followed close after ; they rose into the cavern, and rested from their fatigue, partaking of some refreshments which he had brought there for himself. . . ." Here she remained, visited from time to time by her more fortunate Leander, until he was enabled to carry her off to the Fiji islands, where they dwelt till the death of the tyrant, when they returned to Vavao, "and lived long in peace and happiness."]

## VII.

Forth from her bosom the young savage drew  
 A pine torch, strongly girded with gnato; ;  
 A plantain-leaf o'er all, the more to keep  
 Its latent sparkle from the sapping deep. 140  
 This mantle kept it dry; then from a nook  
 Of the same plantain-leaf a flint she took,  
 A few shrunk withered twigs, and from the blade  
 Of Torquil's knife struck fire, and thus arrayed  
 The grot with torchlight. Wide it was and high,  
 And showed a self-born Gothic canopy;  
 The arch upreared by Nature's architect,  
 The architrave some Earthquake might erect;  
 The buttress from some mountain's bosom hurled,  
 When the Poles crashed, and water was the world; 150  
 Or hardened from some earth-absorbing fire,  
 While yet the globe reeked from its funeral pyre;  
 The fretted pinnacle, the aisle, the nave,<sup>1</sup>  
 Were there, all scooped by Darkness from her cave.  
 There, with a little tinge of phantasy,  
 Fantastic faces moped and mowed on high,  
 And then a mitre or a shrine would fix  
 The eye upon its seeming crucifix.  
 Thus Nature played with the stalactites,<sup>2</sup>  
 And built herself a Chapel of the Seas. 160

1. This may seem too minute for the general outline (in Mariner's Account) from which it is taken. But few men have travelled without seeing something of the kind—on *land*, that is. Without adverting to Ellora, in Mungo Park's last journal, he mentions having met with a rock or mountain so exactly resembling a Gothic cathedral, that only minute inspection could convince him that it was a work of nature.

[Ellora, a village in the Nizám's dominions, is thirteen miles north-west of Aurangábád. "It is famous for its rock-caves and temples. The chief building, called the kailás, . . . is a great monolithic temple, isolated from surrounding rock, and carved outside as well as in. . . . It is said to have been built about the eighth century by Rájá Edu of Ellichpur."—Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, 1885, iv. 348-351. The passage in Mungo Park's *Journal of a Mission to the Interior of Africa*, 1815, p. 75, runs thus: "June 24th [1805].—Left Sullo, and travelled through a country beautiful beyond imagination, with all the possible diversities of *rock*, sometimes towering up like ruined castles, spires, pyramids, etc. We passed one place so like a ruined Gothic abbey, that we halted a little, before we could satisfy ourselves that the niches, windows, etc., were all natural rock."]

2. [Byron's quadrisyllable was, probably, a poetic licence. There is,

## VIII.

And Neuha took her Torquil by the hand,  
And waved along the vault her kindled brand,  
And led him into each recess, and showed  
The secret places of their new abode.  
Nor these alone, for all had been prepared  
Before, to soothe the lover's lot she shared :  
The mat for rest ; for dress the fresh gnatoo,  
And sandal oil to fence against the dew ;  
For food the cocoa-nut, the yam, the bread  
Born of the fruit ; for board the plantain spread 170  
With its broad leaf, or turtle-shell which bore  
A banquet in the flesh it covered o'er ;  
The gourd with water recent from the rill,  
The ripe banana from the mellow hill ;  
A pine-torch pile to keep undying light,  
And she herself, as beautiful as night,  
To fling her shadowy spirit o'er the scene,  
And make their subterranean world serene.  
She had foreseen, since first the stranger's sail  
Drew to their isle, that force or flight might fail, 180  
And formed a refuge of the rocky den  
For Torquil's safety from his countrymen.<sup>1</sup>  
Each dawn had wafted there her light canoe,  
Laden with all the golden fruits that grew ;  
Each eve had seen her gliding through the hour  
With all could cheer or deck their sparry bower ;  
And now she spread her little store with smiles,  
The happiest daughter of the loving isles.

## IX.

She, as he gazed with grateful wonder, pressed  
Her sheltered love to her impassioned breast ; 190  
And suited to her soft caresses, told  
An olden tale of Love,—for Love is old,  
Old as eternity, but not outworn

i. *Where Love and Torquil might be safe from men.*—[MS. D. erased.]  
however, an obsolete plural, *stalactitæ*, to be found in the works of John Woodward, M.D., *Fossils of England*, 1729, i. 155.]

With each new being born or to be born :<sup>1</sup>  
 How a young Chief, a thousand moons ago,  
 Diving for turtle in the depths below,  
 Had risen, in tracking fast his ocean prey,  
 Into the cave which round and o'er them lay ;  
 How, in some desperate feud of after-time,  
 He sheltered there a daughter of the clime, 200  
 A foe beloved, and offspring of a foe,  
 Saved by his tribe but for a captive's woe ;  
 How, when the storm of war was stilled, he led  
 His island clan to where the waters spread  
 Their deep-green shadow o'er the rocky door,  
 Then dived—it seemed as if to rise no more :  
 His wondering mates, amazed within their bark,  
 Or deemed him mad, or prey to the blue shark ;  
 Rowed round in sorrow the sea-girded rock,  
 Then paused upon their paddles from the shock ; 210  
 When, fresh and springing from the deep, they saw  
 A Goddess rise—so deemed they in their awe ;  
 And their companion, glorious by her side,  
 Proud and exulting in his Mermaid bride ;  
 And how, when undeceived, the pair they bore  
 With sounding conchs and joyous shouts to shore ;  
 How they had gladly lived and calmly died,—  
 And why not also Torquil and his bride ?  
 Not mine to tell the rapturous caress  
 Which followed wildly in that wild recess 220  
 This tale ; enough that all within that cave  
 Was love, though buried strong as in the grave,  
 Where Abelard, through twenty years of death,

1. The reader will recollect the epigram of the Greek anthology, or its translation into most of the modern languages—

" Whoe'er thou art, thy master see—  
 He was, or is, or is to be."

[Byron is quoting from memory an "Illustration" in the notes to *Collections from the Greek Anthology*, by the Rev. Robert Bland, 1813, p. 402—

" Whoe'er thou art, thy Lord and master see.  
 Thou wast my Slave, thou art, or thou shalt be."

The couplet was written by George Granville, Lord Lansdowne (1667-1735), as an *Inscription for a Figure representing the God of Love*. (See *The Genuine Works, etc.*, 1732, l. 129.)]

When Eloïsa's form was lowered beneath  
 Their nuptial vault, his arms outstretched, and pressed  
 The kindling ashes to his kindled breast.<sup>1</sup>  
 The waves without sang round their couch, their roar  
 As much unheeded as if life were o'er ;  
 Within, their hearts made all their harmony,  
 Love's broken murmur and more broken sigh. 230

## X.

And they, the cause and sharers of the shock  
 Which left them exiles of the hollow rock,  
 Where were they ? O'er the sea for life they plied,  
 To seek from Heaven the shelter men denied.  
 Another course had been their choice—but where ?  
 The wave which bore them still their foes would bear,  
 Who, disappointed of their former chase,  
 In search of Christian now renewed their race.  
 Eager with anger, their strong arms made way,  
 Like vultures baffled of their previous prey. 240  
 They gained upon them, all whose safety lay  
 In some bleak crag or deeply-hidden bay :  
 No further chance or choice remained ; and right  
 For the first further rock which met their sight  
 They steered, to take their latest view of land,  
 And yield as victims, or die sword in hand ;  
 Dismissed the natives and their shallop, who  
 Would still have battled for that scanty crew ;  
 But Christian bade them seek their shore again,  
 Nor add a sacrifice which were in vain ; 250  
 For what were simple bow and savage spear  
 Against the arms which must be wielded here ?

1. The tradition is attached to the story of Eloïsa, that when her body was lowered into the grave of Abelard (who had been buried twenty years), he opened his arms to receive her.

[The story is told by Bayle, who quotes from a manuscript chronicle of Tours, preserved in the notes of Andreas Quercetanus, affixed to the *Historia Calamitatum Abelardi*: "Eadem defuncta ad tumulum apertum depositata, maritus ejus qui multis diebus ante eam defunctus fuerat, elevatis brachiis eam recepit, et ita eam amplexatus brachia sua strinxit."—See Petri Abelardi *Opera*, Paris, 1616, ii. 1195.]

## XI.

They landed on a wild but narrow scene,  
Where few but Nature's footsteps yet had been ;  
Prepared their arms, and with that gloomy eye,  
Stern and sustained, of man's extremity,  
When Hope is gone, nor Glory's self remains  
To cheer resistance against death or chains,—  
They stood, the three, as the three hundred stood  
Who dyed Thermopylæ with holy blood. 260  
But, ah ! how different ! 'tis the *cause* makes all,  
Degrades or hallows courage in its fall.  
O'er them no fame, eternal and intense,  
Blazed through the clouds of Death and beckoned hence ;  
No grateful country, smiling through her tears,  
Begun the praises of a thousand years ;  
No nation's eyes would on their tomb be bent,  
No heroes envy them their monument ;  
However boldly their warm blood was spilt,  
Their Life was shame, their Epitaph was guilt. 270  
And this they knew and felt, at least the one,  
The leader of the band he had undone ;  
Who, born perchance for better things, had set  
His life upon a cast which lingered yet :  
But now the die was to be thrown, and all  
The chances were in favour of his fall :  
And such a fall ! But still he faced the shock,  
Obdurate as a portion of the rock  
Whereon he stood, and fixed his levelled gun,  
Dark as a sullen cloud before the sun. 280

## XII.

The boat drew nigh, well armed, and firm the crew  
To act whatever Duty bade them do ;  
Careless of danger, as the onward wind  
Is of the leaves it strews, nor looks behind.  
And, yet, perhaps, they rather wished to go  
Against a nation's than a native foe,  
And felt that this poor victim of self-will,  
Briton no more, had once been Britain's still.

They hailed him to surrender—no reply ;  
Their arms were poised, and glittered in the sky. 290  
They hailed again—no answer ; yet once more  
They offered quarter louder than before.  
The echoes only, from the rock's rebound,  
Took their last farewell of the dying sound.  
Then flashed the flint, and blazed the volleying flame,  
And the smoke rose between them and their aim,  
While the rock rattled with the bullets' knell,  
Which pealed in vain, and flattened as they fell ;  
Then flew the only answer to be given  
By those who had lost all hope in earth or heaven. 300  
After the first fierce peal as they pulled nigher,  
They heard the voice of Christian shout, " Now, fire ! "  
And ere the word upon the echo died,  
Two fell ; the rest assailed the rock's rough side,  
And, furious at the madness of their foes,  
Disdained all further efforts, save to close.  
But steep the crag, and all without a path,  
Each step opposed a bastion to their wrath,  
While, placed 'midst clefts the least accessible,  
Which Christian's eye was trained to mark full well, 310  
The three maintained a strife which must not yield,  
In spots where eagles might have chosen to build.  
Their every shot told ; while the assailant fell,  
Dashed on the shingles like the limpet shell ;  
But still enough survived, and mounted still,  
Scattering their numbers here and there, until  
Surrounded and commanded, though not nigh  
Enough for seizure, near enough to die,  
The desperate trio held aloof their fate  
But by a thread, like sharks who have gorged the bait ;  
Yet to the very last they battled well, 321  
And not a groan informed their foes *who* fell.  
Christian died last—twice wounded ; and once more  
Mercy was offered when they saw his gore ;  
Too late for life, but not too late to die,<sup>1</sup>  
With, though a hostile hand, to close his eye.  
A limb was broken, and he drooped along

1. *Too late it might be still at least to die.*—[MS. D. erased.]

The crag, as doth a falcon reft of young.<sup>i</sup>  
 The sound revived him, or appeared to wake  
 Some passion which a weakly gesture spake : 330  
 He beckoned to the foremost, who drew nigh,  
 But, as they neared, he reared his weapon high—  
 His last ball had been aimed, but from his breast  
 He tore the topmost button from his vest,<sup>i</sup> <sup>h</sup>  
 Down the tube dashed it—levelled—fired, and smiled  
 As his foe fell ; then, like a serpent, coiled  
 His wounded, weary form, to where the steep  
 Looked desperate as himself along the deep ;  
 Cast one glance back, and clenched his hand, and shook  
 His last rage 'gainst the earth which he forsook ; 340  
 Then plunged : the rock below received like glass  
 His body crushed into one gory mass,  
 With scarce a shred to tell of human form,  
 Or fragment for the sea-bird or the worm ;  
 A fair-haired scalp, besmeared with blood and weeds,  
 Yet reeked, the remnant of himself and deeds ;  
 Some splinters of his weapons (to the last,  
 As long as hand could hold, he held them fast)  
 Yet glittered, but at distance—hurled away  
 To rust beneath the dew and dashing spray. 350  
 The rest was nothing—save a life mis-spent,  
 And soul—but who shall answer where it went ?  
 'Tis ours to bear, not judge the dead ; and they  
 Who doom to Hell, themselves are on the way,  
 Unless these bullies of eternal pains  
 Are pardoned their bad hearts for their worse brains.

i. *The crag as droop a bird without her young.*—[MS. D. erased.]

ii. *He tore a silver vest* —.—[MS. D. erased.]

x. In Thibault's account of Frederick the Second of Prussia, there is a singular relation of a young Frenchman, who with his mistress appeared to be of some rank. He enlisted and deserted at Schweidnitz ; and after a desperate resistance was retaken, having killed an officer, who attempted to seize him after he was wounded, by the discharge of his musket loaded with a *button* of his uniform. Some circumstances on his court-martial raised a great interest amongst his judges, who wished to discover his real situation in life, which he offered to disclose, but to the *king* only, to whom he requested permission to write. This was refused, and Frederic was filled with the greatest indignation, from baffled curiosity or some other motive, when he understood that his request had been denied. [*Mes Souvenirs de vingt ans de séjour à Berlin, ou Frédéric Le Grand, etc.*, Paris, 1804, iv. 145-150.]



## XIII.

The deed was over ! All were gone or ta'en,  
The fugitive, the captive, or the slain.  
Chained on the deck, where once, a gallant crew,  
They stood with honour, were the wretched few 360  
Survivors of the skirmish on the isle ;  
But the last rock left no surviving spoil.  
Cold lay they where they fell, and weltering,  
While o'er them flapped the sea-birds' dewy wing,  
Now wheeling nearer from the neighbouring surge,  
And screaming high their harsh and hungry dirge :  
But calm and careless heaved the wave below,  
Eternal with unsympathetic flow ;  
Far o'er its face the Dolphins sported on,  
And sprung the flying fish against the sun, 370  
Till its dried wing relapsed from its brief height,  
To gather moisture for another flight.

## XIV.

'Twas morn ; and Neuha, who by dawn of day  
Swam smoothly forth to catch the rising ray,  
And watch if aught approached the amphibious lair  
Where lay her lover, saw a sail in air :  
It flapped, it filled, and to the growing gale  
Bent its broad arch : her breath began to fail  
With fluttering fear, her heart beat thick and high,  
While yet a doubt sprung where its course might lie. 380  
But no ! it came not ; fast and far away  
The shadow lessened as it cleared the bay.  
She gazed, and flung the sea-foam from her eyes,  
To watch as for a rainbow in the skies.  
On the horizon verged the distant deck,  
Diminished, dwindled to a very speck—  
Then vanished. All was Ocean, all was Joy !  
Down plunged she through the cave to rouse her boy ;  
Told all she had seen, and all she hoped, and all  
That happy love could augur or recall ; 390  
Sprung forth again, with Torquil following free  
His bounding Nereid over the broad sea ;

Swam round the rock, to where a shallow cleft  
 Hid the canoe that Neuha there had left  
 Drifting along the tide, without an oar,  
 That eve the strangers chased them from the shore ;  
 But when these vanished, she pursued her prow,  
 Regained, and urged to where they found it now :  
 Nor ever did more love and joy embark,  
 Than now were wafted in that slender ark. 400

## XV.

Again their own shore rises on the view,  
 No more polluted with a hostile hue ;  
 No sullen ship lay bristling o'er the foam,  
 A floating dungeon :—all was Hope and Home !  
 A thousand Proas darted o'er the bay,  
 With sounding shells, and heralded their way ;  
 The chiefs came down, around the people poured,  
 And welcomed Torquil as a son restored ;  
 The women thronged, embracing and embraced  
 By Neuha, asking where they had been chased, 410  
 And how escaped ? The tale was told ; and then  
 One acclamation rent the sky again ;  
 And from that hour a new tradition gave  
 Their sanctuary the name of " Neuha's Cave."  
 A hundred fires, far flickering from the height,<sup>4</sup>  
 Blazed o'er the general revel of the night,  
 The feast in honour of the guest, returned  
 To Peace and Pleasure, perilously earned ;  
 A night succeeded by such happy days  
 As only the yet infant world displays.<sup>4</sup> 420

J. 10<sup>th</sup>  
 ♀ 1823.

- i. *Their hollow shrine* —.—[MS. D. erased.]
- ii. *As only a yet infant* —.—[MS. D.]  
     { *As only an infantine World* —.—  
     { *As only a yet unweaned World* —.—  
                                     [Alternative readings. MS. D.]

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